

Disaster Volunteers Program Guide



TABLE OF CONTENTS

RECORD OF CHANGES.....	3
INTRODUCTION.....	3
RECRUITMENT	3
REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS.....	3
SELECTION CRITERIA.....	4
MAILBOX AND LISTSERV.....	4
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....	4
DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT.....	4
VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT (EMERGENCIES ONLY).....	4
EXPECTATIONS.....	5
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT.....	5
POINTS OF CONTACT.....	6
RESOURCES.....	7

INTRODUCTION

The Florida International University (FIU) Department of Emergency Management (DEM) mission is to guide the University's all-hazard preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation needs by coordinating information and resources to protect students, faculty, staff, and visitors, and restoring operations as soon as possible following a disaster. To successfully accomplish this mission, DEM collaborates with stakeholders and the University community. As part of the 2017 Hurricane Irma After-Action Review, the University found it imperative to better engage the FIU community and to provide the necessary support to effectively activate and run emergency operations.

In 2018, with the support of the Office of the President, DEM introduced the FIU Disaster Volunteers Program. The Disaster Volunteers Program is a cadre of trained and motivated FIU students, faculty, and staff who may be called upon to assist the University with sheltering operations, administrative services, logistical support, call center operations, or other disaster-related tasks either before or after a disaster. Volunteers will be trained in topics such as disaster preparedness, hands-only CPR, stop the bleed and first aid, sheltering operations, fire safety, and more. As a Disaster Volunteer, individuals will have the opportunity to learn the fundamentals of emergency management, build upon their skillset, and help the University prepare for, respond to, and quickly recover from an emergency. Additionally, disaster volunteers bring varying perspectives, fresh talent, and skills to emergency management that could directly support the mission.

Disaster Volunteer assignments are strictly unpaid and without financial compensation. FIU does not provide funds or reimbursement for travel, lodging, or other expenses.

The purpose of this Program Guide is to describe the activities of the FIU Disaster Volunteers Program. This serves as a guidance document and can be modified depending on the circumstances.

RECRUITMENT

FIU Department of Emergency Management is responsible for the recruitment activities associated with the FIU Disaster Volunteers Program. Prospective candidates are always welcome to apply year-round via the DEM website at <https://dem.fiu.edu/disaster-volunteers/index.html>. Additional outreach and recruiting activities such as a tabling and e-mail announcements will occur as needed.

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

FIU Disaster Volunteer applications are available throughout the year. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis. To apply, candidates are asked to complete an application form through the DEM website. Complete applications will include the following information:

- Name, Panther ID, Relationship to FIU
- Contact information: Phone number, FIU e-mail address
- Languages spoken
- Emergency contact information
- List of talents or skills, certifications/licenses
- Orientation/training availability

Applicants should not include any sensitive personal information such as social security numbers or personal health information.

Only complete applications will be considered.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection will be made without regard to race, national origin, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, etc. All applications must meet the following criteria to be eligible to receive a volunteer assignment:

- Be an individual associated with FIU as a current faculty, staff member, or student
- Possess a Panther ID and FIU e-mail account
- Complete the Disaster Volunteer Orientation

MAILBOX AND LISTSERV

For inquiries, volunteers are directed to the official DEM account (dem@fiu.edu). This account is restricted to DEM staff. To communicate the active Disaster Volunteer database, DEM uses an FIU listserv “Disaster Volunteer Program.” The Disaster Volunteers listserv is used to communicate training announcements and a call for volunteers.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The FIU Department of Emergency Management functions as the primary lead for the Disaster Volunteers Program and is responsible for oversight of the Program. DEM shall be responsible for, but not limited to the following:

- Serve as the primary lead and provide program oversight
- Function as a liaison between the Disaster Volunteer Program and the University
- Lead for volunteer recruitment, selection, and execution of the Program
- Coordinate and collaborate with internal and external partners for training and development opportunities
- Manage the volunteer database, DEM mailbox, and listserv
- Provide orientation for new applicants
- Share training and development opportunities with active volunteer database

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT (EMERGENCIES ONLY)

During an activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), the Volunteer Management Unit Lead is responsible for managing the FIU Disaster Volunteers Program. Responsibilities shall include, but not limited to the following:

- Function as the liaison between the Program and the EOC staff
- Provide supervision and direction to volunteers
- Assist with creating and issuing volunteer assignments
- Communicate EOC needs and volunteer assignments via listserv and/or FIU Alert¹
- Liaise and coordinate with other EOC units using Disaster Volunteers to support emergency operations

¹ FIU Alert is an emergency notification system used to notify the FIU community of any imminent or immediate threat to life safety.

- Ensure that volunteers complete FIU Liability forms (see Resources) before accepting assignment
- Ensure that volunteers have adequate credentials, equipment, and other material for volunteer assignments
- Conduct on- and off-boarding with Disaster Volunteers
- Provide sufficient updates regarding the Program to the EOC
- Address and refer concerns and issues regarding the implementation of the Program
- Contribute to after action reviews and administer post-event evaluations

EXPECTATIONS

FIU Department of Emergency Management is expected to provide oversight to the Disaster Volunteers Program, address any leadership inquiries regarding the Program, maintain and update the volunteer database, and share upcoming training opportunities.

FIU Disaster Volunteers are expected to meet university policies and procedures as well as the FIU Faculty Handbook, FIU Student Handbook, and other policies and procedures by the Division of Human Resources. Disaster Volunteers are expected to maintain a professional demeanor, contribute, take initiative, and ask questions.

With the assistance of DEM, the Volunteer Management Unit (at time of an emergency) is expected to manage the Program, respond to all inquiries, and assist in resolving volunteer and program issues. The unit lead will ensure the database is properly maintained and current.

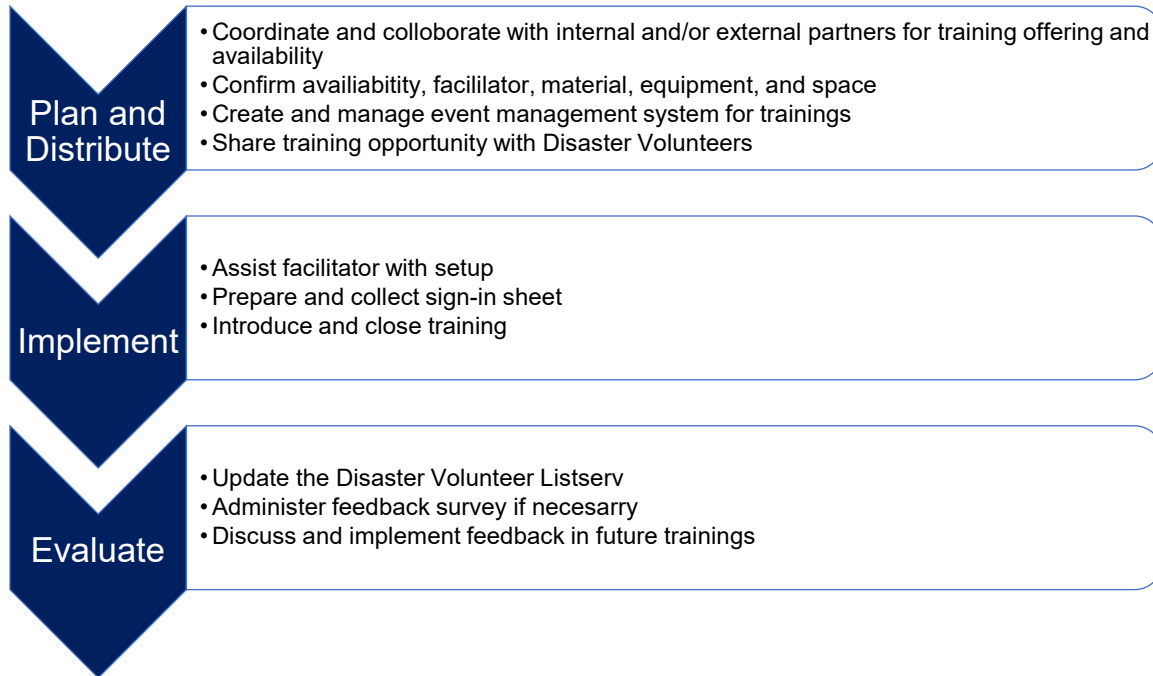
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

FIU Department of Emergency Management strives to offer at least four training and development opportunities each year for the Disaster Volunteer Program participants. The trainings offered include, but not limited to the following:

- National Weather Service SKYWARN® Storm Spotter Program
- Stop the Bleed—Hands Only CPR, AED, and Bleeding Control
- FIU Police: Active Shooter Awareness and Preparation
- Self-Defense Awareness and Familiarization Exchange Training
- Fire Safety

Furthermore, DEM will share additional trainings through the [Panther Connect website](#). Training and development opportunities are subject to change based on need and availability.

Training and development process:



FIU Disaster Volunteers are encouraged to participate in as much training as permitted by availability.

POINTS OF CONTACT

Name	Title	E-mail Address	Phone Number
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RESOURCES

- 1) [FIU Office of the General Counsel: Release, Waiver of Liability, and Assumption of Risk Form](#)
- 2) [FIU Volunteer Application-Applicant Form](#)