

Developing a Spontaneous Volunteer Management (SVM) Action Plan

UServeUtah provides SVM certification to municipalities prepared to accept and manage unaffiliated volunteers. Certification is good for up to three years providing that the municipality maintains their SVM Action Plan, exercises the plan regularly and has steps in place for training new individuals in the event of turnover.



In order to receive certification, a municipality must meet the following criteria:

1. Attend a Spontaneous Volunteer Management Training provided by UServeUtah. Participate in pre and post testing to show competencies in basic SVM principles.
2. Develop a SVM Action Plan for the function of spontaneous volunteer management to be included in the local emergency operation plan.
3. Form or maintain a volunteer coordination team, which includes representatives from local government, area nongovernmental organizations, churches, businesses, and other area organizations that are considered stakeholders in the volunteer management effort. If possible, local emergency managers should allow a representative from this team to participate in the local Emergency Operations Center and Incident Command System organizational structures to ensure that it most closely ties into the actual response in the event of a disaster.
4. Train key officials about the management of spontaneous volunteers.
5. Share public messaging with elected officials and administrators that are likely to be sharing public messaging during a disaster event in advance of an actual event.
6. Form or foster the formation of disaster coalitions, such as Citizen Corps Councils or VOADs among others, to ensure that organizations form pre-disaster relationships, understand each other's capacities, and communicate well in times of need.
7. Develop relationships between voluntary organizations and first responders, which not only fosters increased understanding of what each needs and can offer, but helps to speed up the volunteer placement process once an actual disaster occurs.
8. Identify potential partners that may be called upon for assistance in managing volunteers, or into which spontaneous volunteer resources may be placed, including:
 - Universities
 - Youth Groups
 - Schools
 - Ethnic Associations

- Neighborhood Groups
 - Civic Associations
 - Foundations
 - Faith-based Organizations
 - Corporations/Businesses
 - Special Needs Groups
 - Voluntary Agencies
 - Senior Programs
 - National Service Programs
 - Hospitals
9. Identify and record potential sites for the VRC placement and develop contingency plans in the event that pre-identified sites are unavailable.
 10. Determine software and hardware needs in order to manage data collection on volunteers.
 11. Determine back-up plans for power failures and portability.
 12. Become familiar with items already supplied in Go-Kit and determine additional resources that may be desired or needed.
 13. Exercise the staging of a VRC with either paid staff or volunteers who are willing to do so in the event of a disaster.
 14. Develop procedures for documenting pertinent activities, training, expenses, volunteer hours, dollar value of donated time, skills, and success stories.
 15. Establish agreements with local and state emergency management agencies regarding expense reimbursement and required documentation.
 16. Develop methods for evaluating volunteers' experience.
 17. Determine priority needs and volunteer roles prior to an event in order to identify potential volunteer opportunities to expedite community involvement following a disaster.
 18. Review local and state hazard analysis and collect community demographic information for implications regarding the management of unaffiliated volunteers.

19. Research existing volunteer liability issues and laws that affect unaffiliated volunteer utilization, and encourage agencies and organizations that will receive unaffiliated volunteers to clarify their limits of liability protection.
20. Develop media and public education campaigns that encourage people to undertake pre-involvement and affiliation with existing voluntary organizations.