

Volunteer Management Functional Annex

Updated: October 15, 2025

I. PURPOSE

These operating procedures describe the function of managing volunteer services in the event of a major disaster, ensuring a coordinated response and recovery effort for the benefit of Alexander County residents. This plan also guides the organized recruitment, registration, credentialing, onboarding, assignment, and utilization of volunteers who offer their time and services during emergencies. Alexander County prioritizes the use of pre-identified, trained, and certified volunteers from trusted partner agencies to ensure safety, efficiency, and accountability.

II. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. Volunteers often respond in large numbers following a disaster, motivated by a desire to help their communities.
2. Without a structured volunteer management system, these efforts may become inefficient or counterproductive.
3. Effective volunteer coordination ensures the safety of volunteers and maximizes their contributions.
4. Coordination with public information services is essential to direct potential volunteers appropriately.
5. Pre-existing agreements with volunteer organizations are essential to streamline operations.
6. Volunteer management requires appropriate facilities, equipment, and communication systems.
7. The spontaneous arrival of unaffiliated volunteers can overwhelm disaster response systems without proper planning.
8. Partner organizations such as the American Red Cross, North Carolina Baptists on Mission, CERT, and other VOAD members are essential to volunteer coordination. These groups are responsible for pre-event recruitment, credentialing, and training.

B. Assumptions

1. Volunteers will come from within and outside of Alexander County.
2. A centralized volunteer reception center will be established for registration, credentialing, and assignments.
3. There will be varying levels of skills and training among volunteers.
4. Some volunteers will possess specialized skills needed for response and recovery.
5. Public messaging will influence the number and type of volunteers received.
6. Coordination with charitable and faith-based organizations will be essential in managing volunteers.
7. Liability, safety, and accountability procedures must be enforced to protect both volunteers and the public.
8. Volunteers will operate under the authority of recognized and credentialed agencies and in compliance with federal, state, and local legal and ethical standards.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. General

1. Volunteer management aims to ensure that volunteer efforts are efficiently directed, safely executed, and responsive to identified needs.
2. The Alexander County Emergency Management Office will appoint a Volunteer Coordinator to oversee the registration, credentialing, and deployment of volunteers. Taylorsville Rotary Club has agreed to fill this role.
3. All volunteers must register through the Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) before being assigned.
4. The county will promote volunteer affiliations with recognized organizations to enhance coordination and reduce risk.
5. All volunteer activities will be evaluated post-activation to improve planning and execution for future events.

B. Registration and Credentialing

1. The Volunteer Coordinator will operate the Volunteer Reception Center in coordination with the EOC.
2. Volunteers will complete a registration form including personal information, skillsets, availability, and emergency contacts.
3. Credentialing will verify volunteer identity, relevant certifications, and any specialized qualifications.
4. All volunteers must sign the Alexander County Volunteer Agreement Form and liability waiver (see Annex A).
5. Partner organizations are responsible for ensuring their volunteers are pre-credentialed and trained.
6. Upon activation, volunteers will check in at designated VRCs or remotely, where credentials will be verified and assignments coordinated.
7. Volunteer assignments, hours, and contact history will be tracked and maintained at the registration area.

C. Deployment and Assignment

1. Volunteers will be assigned based on skills, certifications, operational needs, and availability.
2. Assignments will be coordinated with response agencies to avoid duplication.
3. Volunteers may serve in roles such as shelter staffing, Point of Distribution (POD) operations, donation site support, logistics, administrative assistance, crisis counseling, medical support, or damage assessment (as qualified).
4. Job descriptions, expectations, safety protocols, and supervisory contact information will be provided.
5. The Volunteer Coordinator will ensure volunteers receive proper orientation and have their own personal protective equipment (PPE), if required.
6. Volunteers working in high-risk areas will be directly supervised by trained personnel.
7. Volunteers must operate within the scope of their training and assigned duties, maintain professionalism, and follow safety protocols.

D. Volunteer Reception Center

1. The VRC will be established in a facility outside the immediate disaster area.
2. It will serve as the central location for registration, orientation, and assignment.
3. The VRC will coordinate closely with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the County Public Information Officer.

E. Public Information Officer

1. All public messaging regarding volunteer efforts will be coordinated through the County Public Information Officer (PIO).
2. Messages will include who should volunteer, where to report, and how to register.
3. Messages will discourage self-deployment and encourage affiliation with recognized groups.
4. Volunteers will receive updates through their parent organizations to ensure real-time communication about assignments, safety guidance, and operational changes.
5. Ongoing engagement will include recognition of volunteer efforts, feedback opportunities, and encouragement for preparedness training and continued involvement. Volunteer-related public messaging will be coordinated through the County Public Information Officer.

F. Volunteer Safety and Liability

1. Volunteers will be briefed on safety protocols relevant to their assignments.
2. Liability waivers will be signed during registration.
3. Volunteers are expected to be self-sustaining with feeding, lodging, and PPE unless otherwise specified.
4. All activities will comply with legal standards regarding liability protection, confidentiality, nondiscrimination, and workplace safety.
5. Volunteers must respect the dignity and rights of disaster survivors and maintain confidentiality of sensitive information in accordance with HIPAA rules and regulations.
6. Partner agencies are responsible for training volunteers on legal and ethical responsibilities and ensuring they are insured and background-checked as appropriate.
7. Any concerns regarding misconduct or liability will be addressed by the County in consultation with legal counsel and partner agencies.

IV. DIRECTION AND CONTROL

- A. The Alexander County Emergency Management Coordinator will provide overall direction and appoint a Volunteer Coordinator.
- B. The Volunteer Coordinator will oversee all volunteer-related functions and maintain coordination with responding agencies.
- C. Nongovernmental organizations will provide coordination within their organizations and can assist with volunteer coordination.

V. CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT

The line of succession is:

1. Volunteer Coordinator (Taylorsville Rotary Club)
2. Emergency Management Coordinator

VI. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

Periodic review and amendment of this plan will be attempted annually. The review date appears at the top of this document. Feedback from partner agencies will be considered in updates.

VII. ATTACHMENTS

Annex A: Volunteer Agreement Form



Annex A: Volunteer Agreement & Liability Form

Volunteer Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Emergency Contact Name: _____

Emergency Contact Phone: _____

Services Provided: _____

Acknowledgment and Agreement

I, the undersigned, acknowledge and agree to the following terms and conditions as a volunteer providing services in Alexander County during a disaster or event:

1. Voluntary Participation

I understand and agree that my participation is strictly voluntary, and I am not affiliated with any government agency, non-profit organization, or contracted service provider.

2. No Compensation or Reimbursement

I agree that I am offering my services without expectation of compensation, reimbursement, or any form of financial support or funding from Alexander County. I will not seek payment for services rendered, expenses incurred, or equipment used.

3. Assumption of Risk

I understand that volunteering during a disaster or emergency event may involve hazardous conditions. I voluntarily assume all risks associated with my participation, including but not limited to the risk of personal injury, illness, death, or damage to personal property or equipment.

4. Release of Liability

I hereby release, waive, discharge, and hold harmless Alexander County, its employees, officials, agents, and representatives from any and all liability, claims, demands, actions, or causes of action arising out of or related to any loss, damage, or injury, including death, that may be sustained by me or to any property I bring during the course of my participation.

5. **Independent Capacity**

I acknowledge that I am not acting as an employee, agent, or representative of Alexander County. I understand that I am functioning independently and of my own accord.

6. **Compliance with Instructions and Safety**

I agree to follow the instructions of County personnel and abide by all applicable safety guidelines, laws, and policies while volunteering.

7. **Medical Treatment**

I understand that Alexander County does not provide medical coverage for volunteers and that I am responsible for my own medical insurance and any medical expenses incurred as a result of my volunteer activities.

8. **Consent for Photography and Media**

I give permission for Alexander County to photograph, video, or otherwise capture my image or voice during volunteer activities. I understand that these materials may be used in County publications, websites, social media, or other public information materials. I waive any rights to compensation or ownership of such media and release the County from any liability related to their use.

Acknowledgment and Signature

I have read this Volunteer Agreement, understand its terms, and agree to be bound by it. I sign this document voluntarily and acknowledge that by doing so, I am waiving certain legal rights.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature (if under 18): _____

Date: _____