

**RIO TEXAS CONFERENCE  
DISASTER RESPONSE MINISTRY MANUAL**



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## **Preface**

The Rio Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church is committed to providing assistance following disasters. This manual is prepared in response to this commitment. It outlines the organization and protocols for disaster response and recovery in the conference. In addition, this manual sets out the duties of individuals in the church and provides information regarding various operational aspects of disaster relief and response, such as management of donated goods. This manual provides a source of policies and procedures that guide disaster response ministry in the Rio Texas Conference. It also provides guidance for various individuals (e.g. pastors and conference leadership) who are not part of the established disaster response structure but may be called upon to provide service when disaster strikes.

The December 2022 change incorporates:

- Complete reordering and restructuring of the manual to streamline and better organize the contents
- Rewriting of UMCOR Warehouse procedures, based on changes to UMCOR's operating procedures (Pg 35-36)
- Update to Disaster Response Committee Membership (Appendix A)

## 1. Background Information

### a. Phases of Disaster

- i. It is useful to identify phases of disasters because the activities of various individuals and entities will vary greatly depending on the phase of the disaster in which they find themselves. For purposes of this document, five disaster phases will be identified. These range from preparing ourselves for disaster to reviewing the response effort with a goal of improving future responses.
  1. **The Readiness Phase** is the period between disasters when planning is done and preparations are made. It is also a time when relationships are built among entities that may be impacted by a disaster or may respond after a disaster occurs.
  2. **The Rescue Phase** is the period immediately after the disaster. The primary activity during this phase is by trained emergency personnel. The disaster area may be evacuated and residents may not be allowed to return to their homes. Outside groups such as Early Response Teams will not be allowed to enter the area. The rescue phase is a time when responders can begin to muster and plan for impending deployment.
  3. **The Relief Phase** is the period when clean up occurs and homes are protected from further damage. Families may return to their homes or may be in shelters or temporary housing. Early Response Teams are deployed during this phase to assist families make their homes safe, sanitary and secure as well as serve the community as needed. Preliminary work to organize for long term recovery begins during the relief phase.
  4. **The Recovery Phase** is the time it takes to get families and the community to a new normal following the disaster. This period requires extensive volunteer and financial support to assist with repair and rebuilding of homes. The work generally is under the direction of a community based Long Term Recovery Group. The Rio Texas Conference works cooperatively with the long-term recovery groups during the recovery phase.
  5. **The Review Phase** occurs at the end of the Rescue, Relief and Recovery phases. During review, those involved evaluate the activities to determine what worked well and what could have been done better. Based on this review, all parties involved will initiate action to promote continuous improvement of disaster response ministry.

## **b. Levels of Disaster**

- i. Disaster levels are highly subjective and relate more to the ability of a community to respond than to the specific damage done.
- ii. **Low Level:** Involves a limited number of households. Community resources are adequate to provide for affected residents. The local United Methodist Church members should provide assistance as they are able. The District Disaster Response Coordinator should be notified of response activities.
- iii. **Medium Level:** Involves an entire community or several scattered communities. Assistance provided by organizing district response through the Conference or District Disaster Response Coordinator. Early Response Teams may be deployed, depending on the needs of the community.
- iv. **High Level:** Involves a wide area and requires a massive response by state and national agencies. The Disaster Response Committee organizes a conference-wide response to the crisis and assists districts and local churches. Early Response Teams may be invited to cross conference boundaries in response to high level disasters.

## **c. The Role of UMCOR in Disaster Response**

- i. The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) is a partner agency of Rio Texas Disaster Response. They support domestic disaster response in three primary areas:
  1. **Training** – They provide training and credentialing of Early Response Teams (ERTs), Disaster Case Managers for long-term recovery as well as training resources such as the Connecting Neighbors curriculum. In addition, they support training workshops at the jurisdictional and national level that provide training opportunities for disaster response personnel.
  2. **Funding** – UMCOR provides grants to supplement the resources available in the conference. Solidarity grants of up to \$10,000 are available to meet needs in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. Recovery Grants provide larger amounts of funding for recovery efforts. They may be for specific programs such as case management or for more general items like meeting unmet needs.
  3. **Consultation** – UMCOR provides a variety of consultation services to meet special needs related to disaster response. For example, they may be called upon to provide advice to disaster response leadership during large disasters, to communities attempting to establish long term recovery organizations, or to

congregations with spiritual and emotional crises as they recover from disaster.

## **2. Rio Texas Conference Disaster Response Committee**

### **a. Purpose and Organization**

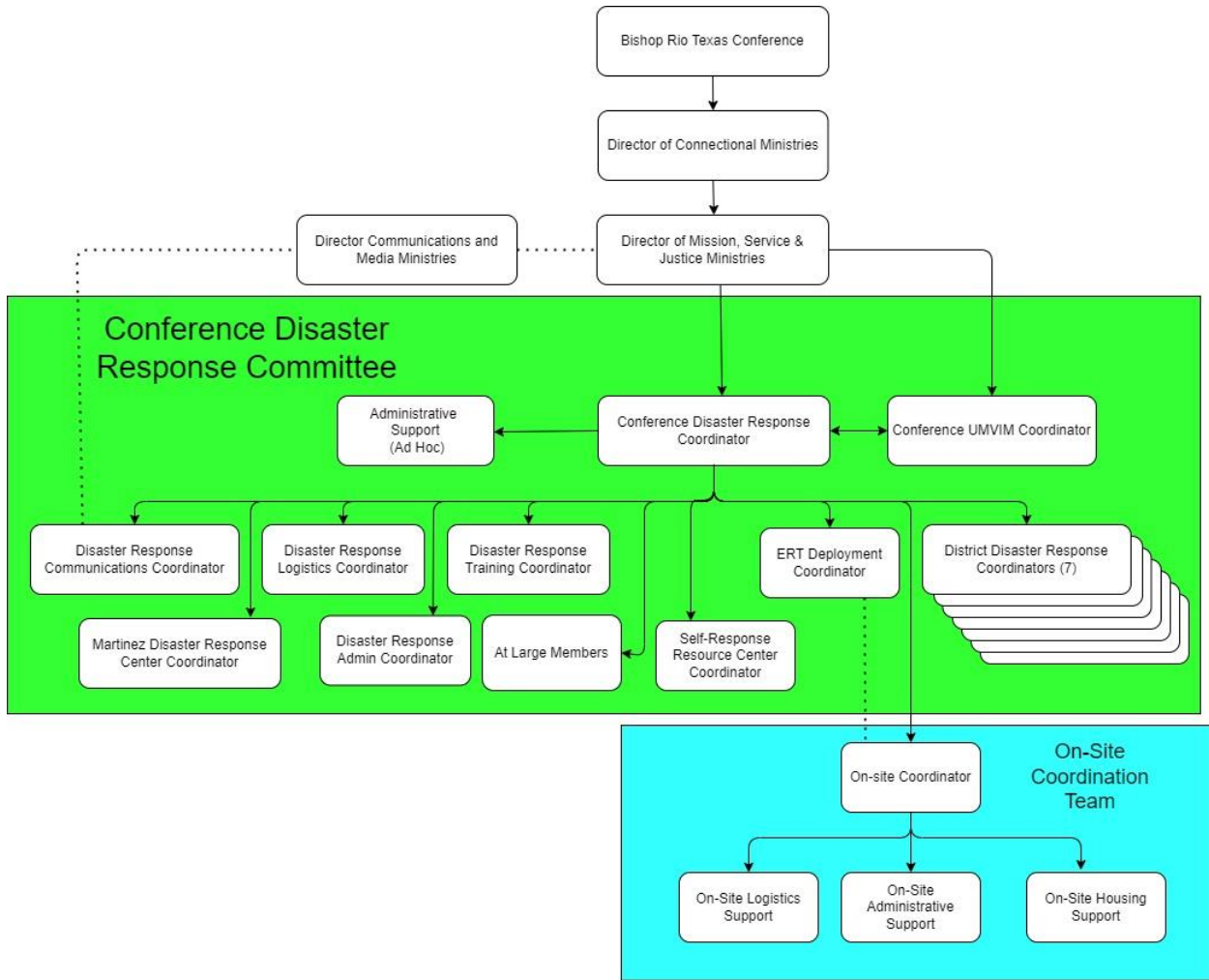
- i. The Rio Texas Conference Disaster Response Committee establishes policy and procedures for disaster response ministry. The Conference Disaster Response Committee works with the Director of Mission, Service & Justice Ministries. The functions of the Conference Disaster Response Committee are to:
  1. Set broad policies and procedures related to disaster response
  2. Prepare and maintain a Conference Disaster Response Manual
  3. Facilitate disaster response planning throughout the conference
  4. Monitor the progress of the response
  5. Evaluate response effectiveness.
- ii. Members of the committee are the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (CDRC), who serves as chair, all (7) District Disaster Response Coordinators, Conference United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) Coordinator, the Disaster Response Communications Coordinator, Disaster Response Administrative Coordinator, the Martinez Disaster Response Center Coordinator, Disaster Response Logistics Coordinator, Disaster Response Training Coordinator, ERT Coordinator, Survivor Self Response Resource Center Coordinator and at-large members as appropriate to achieve the disaster response mission. The Director of Mission, Service & Justice serves as an ex-officio member of the committee
- iii. The Committee will meet at least one time per year. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair or at the request of three members of the committee.

### **b. Executive Committee.**

- i. A Conference Disaster Response Executive Committee will be elected by the Conference Disaster Response Committee at the beginning of each year. The committee will be comprised of the CDRC (chair) and two members of the Conference Disaster Response Committee. The Executive Committee is given authority to act quickly when extraordinary circumstances deem it necessary, without consent by the full Committee. In addition, the executive committee must approve budgeted purchases greater than \$800 (see Financial Policies and Procedures).



**c. Organization of the Disaster Response Committee**



- A description of Duties and Responsibilities of Committee members can be found on pages 10-22
- A description of the On-Site Coordination Team can be found in Appendix E

## **d. Duties and Responsibilities of the Disaster Response Committee Members**

### **i. The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (CDRC)**

1. Primary Roles:
  - a. Provide leadership to all phases of the disaster response ministry
  - b. Coordinate and communicate disaster response plans and activities with Rio Texas Conference leadership
  - c. Communicate Rio Texas Conference disaster response needs with UMCOR and the South Central Jurisdiction UMVIM/Disaster Response Coordinator
  - d. Coordinate Rio Texas Disaster Response with Texas Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (TVOAD), regional VOADs, Texas Department of Emergency Management and other organizations responding to disasters in the geographic area of the Rio Texas Conference
2. Readiness Phase
  - a. Develop and maintain a current conference disaster response manual
  - b. Work with District Superintendents and conference leadership to fill District Disaster Response Coordinator positions and other positions on the Conference Disaster Response Committee
  - c. Work with District Disaster Response Coordinators and UMCOR authorized Early Response Team (ERT) trainers to schedule ERT training
  - d. Establish working relationships with Texas VOAD and its members
3. Rescue Phase
  - a. Establish an appropriate communications system for the disaster (e.g. periodic conference call)
  - b. Work with the District Disaster Response Coordinator to recruit an ERT On-Site Coordinator for the disaster
4. Relief Phase
  - a. Work with the District Disaster Response Coordinators to assess needs following the disaster
  - b. Ask the Bishop to request an UMCOR Emergency Grant if resources are needed
  - c. Determine when and where ERTs are to be deployed and issue a call for deployment at the appropriate time

- d. Work with the Warehouse Coordinator and affected communities to identify needs for Cleaning Kits and have them delivered to appropriate sites
  - e. When needed, contact the South Central Jurisdiction to issue an invitation to ERTs from outside the Conference
  - f. Provide assistance to local communities as they establish Long Term Recovery Organizations
  - g. Monitor the response leadership for burn out and stress
5. Recovery Phase
- a. Determine recovery needs of the community and how the Rio Texas Conference can assist in providing resources to meet those needs
  - b. Apply for UMCOR Recovery Grants as deemed appropriate
  - c. Encourage local and district leaders to serve on the Long-Term Recovery Organizations
  - d. Work with the Conference UMVIM Coordinator to recruit volunteers to assist with recovery work
  - e. Work with conference and district leadership to help raise funds to assist families in long term recovery
6. Review Phase
- a. Conduct an after-action review of the Conference Disaster Response effort. (After action reviews should be conducted at the end of relief activities as appropriate and not only at the close of all response activities)
  - b. Complete close-out reports for grants
  - c. Modify Conference Disaster Response Manual based on successes and failures identified in the after-action reviews

## **ii. District Disaster Response Coordinators**

1. Primary Roles
  - a. Serve as the primary point person for disaster response in the district
  - b. Communicate and coordinate disaster response activities and programs to district leadership and churches
  - c. Serve on the Conference Disaster Response Committee
2. Readiness phase
  - a. Encourage churches in the district to develop disaster response plans
  - b. Establish a working relationship with area emergency management personnel and other groups or agencies who may be involved in disaster response and recovery
  - c. Encourage volunteerism and promote the need to participate in available disaster response trainings
  - d. Establish and foster development of ERT clusters
  - e. Assess the capacity of the churches in the district to host ERTs and UMVIM Teams
  - f. Assess the availability of other resources in the local area to host teams (Campgrounds, other churches, youth camps, etc.)
3. Rescue Phase
  - a. Contact pastors in affected area to plan a visit
  - b. Communicate the needs to the District Superintendent in the event that pastors, congregants or church property experienced damage
  - c. Plan a preliminary visit to the affected area as soon as it is safe and the area is open. The District Disaster Response Coordinator might be accompanied by the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, District Superintendent and pastors from the affected communities as available and deemed appropriate
  - d. Contact Emergency Management Office(s) in the affected area to determine needs and offer assistance
  - e. Assist the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator in identifying, recruiting and training an On-Site Coordinators and other personnel as needed, for the event
4. Relief Phase
  - a. Work with conference leadership to coordinate ERT assignments and accommodations
  - b. Maintain contact with Emergency Management Office to determine needs and offer assistance

- c. Monitor ERT record keeping and ensure that appropriate records and forms are forwarded to the Conference Communications Coordinator
- 5. Recovery Phase
  - a. Offer assistance in the organization of a Long-Term Recovery Committee. (This may actually happen during the relief phase of the disaster)
  - b. Ensure ongoing participation and communication with the Long-Term Recovery Committee
  - c. Work with District UMVIM Coordinator to recruit volunteers for long term recovery
  - d. Monitor Long-Term Recovery record keeping
- 6. Review Phase
  - a. Participate in after action reviews

### **iii. Disaster Response Communications Coordinator**

1. Primary Roles
  - a. Work with CDRC and Committee Members to develop publicity and marketing materials for the promotion of training and service opportunities associated with disaster response ministries
  - b. Establish and maintain a presence on current social media to maintain open communications with the Conference Disaster Response Committee leadership and volunteers throughout the various phases of disasters
  - c. Provide current information to the Conference Communications Office regarding disaster response accomplishments and opportunities for publicity
  - d. Act as Webmaster for the [riotexasresponse.org](http://riotexasresponse.org) website, ensuring currency and relevancy of postings on the site.
2. Readiness phase
  - a. Maintain accounts in appropriate social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) so that they are viable means of communication when needed
  - b. Use email, social media, website, and other methods to reach out to and connect with those who may be willing to volunteer in the event of a disaster
  - c. Publicize and advertise all available training and networking opportunities
  - d. Use all available communications tools to help “tell the story” of disaster response ministries, involving leadership, volunteers and survivors whenever appropriate and possible
3. Rescue Phase
  - a. Use all available communications tools to help “tell the story” of disaster response ministries, involving leadership, volunteers and survivors whenever appropriate and possible
4. Relief Phase
  - a. Use all available communications tools to help “tell the story” of disaster response ministries, involving leadership, volunteers and survivors whenever appropriate and possible
5. Recovery Phase
  - a. Communicate known needs to volunteers through social media, website, email and other available means
  - b. Use all available communications tools to help “tell the story” of disaster response ministries, involving

leadership, volunteers and survivors whenever appropriate and possible

6. Review Phase
  - a. Participate in after action reviews

#### **iv. Martinez Disaster Response Center Coordinator**

1. Primary Roles
  - a. Oversee the operations of the Martinez Disaster Response Center
  - b. In coordination with Logistics Coordinator, plan for distribution of relief supplies stored in the warehouse within the Rio Texas Conference
  - c. As needs arise, coordinate with UMCOR and/or other CDRCs, plan for distribution of relief supplies stored in the warehouse outside the Rio Texas Conference
  - d. Provide monthly inventory of UMCOR kits to UMCOR Sager Brown
2. Readiness phase
  - a. Work with the UMVIM Coordinator to recruit volunteers to assist with warehouse functions
  - b. Work with volunteers to verify and process UMCOR kits received by the warehouse
  - c. Prepare kits received at the warehouse for shipment
3. Rescue Phase
  - a. Make plans to ship cleaning kits (and other kits if needed) to appropriate areas
4. Relief Phase
  - a. Ship cleaning kits (and other kits if needed) to appropriate areas as directed
5. Recovery Phase
  - a. Communicate the need for restocking kits to the desired level
6. Review Phase
  - a. Participate in the after-action reviews



## **v. Disaster Response Logistics Coordinator**

1. Primary Roles
  - a. Manage the conference-owned equipment associated with Disaster Response and Recovery
    - i. Equipment Trailers
    - ii. Chainsaws
    - iii. Team Tools
    - iv. Skid Steer & Trailer
  - b. Establish and Maintain Equipment Checkout and Inventory Systems
  - c. Maintain documentation on assigned equipment
  - d. Keep an accurate inventory of all conference-owned Disaster Response Equipment
  - e. Ensure maintenance of all assigned equipment
  - f. Keep maintenance records for all assigned equipment
  - g. Report needs to Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
  - h. Purchase new and replacement equipment and consumables as needed
  - i. Request approval for expenditures from the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
  - j. Coordinate relocation of required equipment to work sites as needed.
  - k. In coordination with Martinez Disaster Response Center Coordinator, plan and implement distribution of relief supplies stored in the warehouse
2. Readiness phase
  - a. Ensure that assigned equipment is maintained and ready for use
3. Rescue Phase
  - a. Coordinate with CDRC in anticipating and identifying the needs in the affected areas
4. Relief Phase
  - a. Coordinate distribution of assigned assets in and out of the affected areas
5. Recovery Phase
  - a. Continue to manage distribution of assets to and from the affected areas
6. Review Phase
  - a. Participate in the after-action reviews

## **vi. Disaster Response Training Coordinator**

1. Primary Roles
  - a. Manage all aspects of ERT training
  - b. Work with trainers and CDRC to schedule classes
  - c. Obtain and distribute class supplies
    - i. Manuals
      1. ERT Basic
      2. ERT Chainsaw
      3. 200 Series courses
    - ii. T-Shirts
    - iii. Chainsaw Helmets and Equipment
  - d. Monitor ERT expiration dates and coordinate renewal efforts
  - e. Assist individual ERTs in completion of UMCOR Background Check
  - f. Coordinate ERT Badge ordering and distribution with UMCOR
  - g. Manage all aspects of Just in Time Training coordination
  - h. Update ERT Database
2. Readiness phase
  - a. Monitor training status of all conference ERTs and facilitate training and retraining as needed
  - b. Update online ERT Database with training and qualification related entries
3. Rescue Phase
  - a. Assess current training needs and advise CDRC regarding potential shortfalls
4. Relief Phase
  - a. Facilitate Just in Time Training as needed (See Appendix D)
5. Recovery Phase
  - a. Monitor training status of all conference ERTs and facilitate training and retraining as needed
6. Review Phase
  - a. Participate in the after-action review

## **vii. Disaster Response Administrative Coordinator**

1. Primary Roles
  - a. Maintain records associated with disaster response and recovery, especially volunteer hours, individual volunteer liability releases and property access forms
  - b. Act as recording secretary for all Disaster Response Committee meetings, maintain meeting records and disseminate meeting minutes to all members in a timely manner.
  - c. Administer online ERT and DIRRT Databases
  - d. Develop, review, update and maintain manuals, documents, forms and reports associated with Disaster Response
  - e. Send quarterly ERT Deployment reports to UMCOR
2. Readiness phase
  - a. Participate in Disaster Response ministry as needed
  - b. Maintain Disaster Response Ministry Manual
  - c. Manage Online Document Storage
3. Rescue Phase
  - a. Participate in Disaster Response ministry as needed
4. Relief Phase
  - a. Coordinate with Conference and District Disaster Response Coordinators, Team Leaders and On-Site Coordinators for the reporting and retention of volunteer hours, individual volunteer liability releases and property access forms
  - b. Enter ERT deployment information into ERT and DIRRT online Databases
5. Recovery Phase
  - a. Capture and maintain volunteer information during recovery efforts
  - b. Assist the Conference UMVIM Coordinator with the reporting and retention of volunteer hours and other forms
6. Review Phase
  - a. Participate in after action reviews

### **viii. ERT Deployment Coordinator**

1. Primary Roles
  - a. Reports to Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
  - b. Oversees the communication to and deployment of ERTs in the conference.
2. Readiness Phase
  - a. Communicates anticipated deployment needs to Rio Texas ERTs via e-mail
3. Relief Phase
  - a. Communicates deployment needs to Rio Texas ERTs via e-mail
  - b. Receives ERT registrations & initiates communication with Team Leaders
    - i. Proposed dates and location of deployment
    - ii. Reporting requirements & forms
    - iii. Hands off ERTs to On-Site Coordinator
  - c. Receives and tracks team deployment documentation from On-Site Coordinator or Team Leaders
  - d. Keep District Disaster Response Coordinator(s) informed of disaster response needs and activities in their district(s)
4. Recovery Phase
  - a. Support recovery efforts with “backfilling” ERTs in to assist with any remaining response-related efforts (Mold removal, much and gut, replacement of tarps while awaiting repairs, etc.)
5. Review Phase
  - a. Participate in after action reviews

**ix. Survivor Self-Response Resource Center Coordinator**

1. Primary Roles
  - a. Reports to Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
  - b. Oversees the preparation, maintenance and deployment of the Survivor Self-Response Resource Center
2. Readiness Phase
  - a. Prepares and maintains the components of the Resource Center for deployment
3. Relief Phase
  - a. Coordinates with Logistics Coordinator and other leaders to deploy the resource center to affected communities
  - b. Assists in training and coordination of volunteers to man the center when deployed
4. Recovery Phase
  - a. N/A
5. Review Phase
  - a. Participate in after action reviews

**x. Conference UMVIM Coordinator – (Disaster Response Responsibilities)**

1. Primary Roles:
  - a. Recruit and organize volunteers for long term recovery needs
  - b. Serve on the Conference Disaster Response Committee
2. Readiness Phase
  - a. Serve as a member of the Disaster Response Committee
  - b. Work with the Conference Disaster Response Committee in the planning process
  - c. Make certain that UMVIM/Team Leader Trainings are conducted
3. Rescue Phase
  - a. N/A
4. Relief Phase
  - a. Begin planning for Long-Term Recovery
5. Recovery Phase
  - a. Recruit and deploy UMVIM teams to assist in the recovery operations of Long Term Recovery Organizations
  - b. Maintain records of the volunteer contributions to the recovery effort and forward them to the Disaster Response Communications Coordinator
6. Review Phase
  - a. Participate in after action reviews

## **2. Duties and Responsibilities of Conference Leadership**

### **a. The Role of the Bishop**

#### **i. Primary Roles:**

1. Serve as a symbol of a caring church in the response to disasters
2. Provide leadership to the disaster response effort by assuring that personnel and resources are in place so the church is prepared to respond to disasters
3. Encourage congregations in the Conference to provide financial and volunteer resources to the disaster response effort

#### **ii. Readiness phase**

1. Appoint a Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
2. Review the Conference Disaster Response Manual and make suggestions as appropriate
3. Ensure familiarity with the Disaster Response Manual by the Cabinet and Extended Cabinet

#### **iii. Rescue Phase**

1. Request an Emergency Grant from UMCOR as determined in discussions with the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and the Director of Mission, Service & Justice Ministries
2. Communicate with District Superintendents in affected area(s) to ensure them that they have the support of the Bishop

#### **iv. Relief Phase**

1. Visit the affected area when appropriate, to demonstrate the support of the church to the community
2. Depending upon the extent of damage, issue a Bishop's call for a special offering designated for "Conference Disaster Response and Recovery Efforts"
3. Monitor the District Superintendents and Pastors in the affected area for burn out and stress

#### **v. Recovery Phase**

1. Provide continuing encouragement to the recovery effort
2. Monitor the district superintendents and pastors in the affected area for burn out and stress

#### **vi. Review Phase**

1. Depending on availability and the size of the disaster, participate in the after action review

## **b. The Role of District Superintendents**

### **i. Primary roles:**

1. Serve as pastor to pastors during a disaster
2. Appoint a District Disaster Response Coordinator

### **ii. Readiness phase**

1. Communicate the Conference Disaster Response Manual to district leadership and churches
2. Encourage churches in the district to plan for disasters by using UMCOR's Connecting Neighbors program

### **iii. Rescue Phase**

1. Contact pastors in the affected area to determine the extent to which churches and communities have been impacted and offer assistance as appropriate
2. Communicate disaster response needs to District and Conference Disaster Response Coordinators
3. Participate in conference calls organized to facilitate communication among conference entities responding to the disaster
4. Encourage giving to the Conference Disaster Response Fund

### **iv. Relief Phase**

1. Assess damage to churches and assist congregations to make temporary arrangements for facilities where necessary
2. Monitor pastors in the affected area for burn out and stress\
3. If available, accompany Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, District Disaster Response Coordinator and pastors to make an assessment tour of the affected area and area churches when it is safe to do so
4. Invite the Bishop to visit the affected area and churches as appropriate
5. Offer support to churches in the affected area as they minister to the community in the aftermath of the disaster
6. Encourage giving to the Conference Disaster Response Fund

### **v. Recovery Phase**

1. Monitor pastors in the affected area for burn out and stress related problems
2. Offer support to churches in the affected area as they minister to the community in the aftermath of the disaster
3. Encourage giving to the Conference Disaster Response Fund



4. Monitor Progress in affected areas through local pastors and On-Site Coordinators, if assigned
- vi. Review Phase
  1. Participate in after action reviews

**c. The Role of United Methodist Pastors**

- i. Primary Roles:
  - 1. Minister to the congregation and community in times of disaster
  - 2. Serve as a contact for the disaster response leadership regarding the situation on the ground when a disaster occurs in the community
- ii. Readiness phase
  - 1. Encourage the church and members of the congregation to plan for disaster
  - 2. Designate a Disaster Response Coordinator
- iii. Rescue Phase
  - 1. Assess damage to church property and assess the needs of the community
  - 2. Provide support to disaster responders as resources permit
  - 3. Communicate the needs of the community to the District Disaster Response Coordinator
- iv. Relief Phase
  - 1. Provide support to disaster responders as resources permit
  - 2. Seek opportunities to minister to the community in the aftermath of the disaster
- v. Recovery Phase
  - 1. Seek opportunities to minister to the community in the aftermath of the disaster
  - 2. Monitor the recovery of disaster survivors in the congregation giving special attention to anniversaries and other events that may give rise to emotional crises
- vi. Review Phase
  - 1. Participate in after action reviews
  - 2. Conduct an after action review in the church and revise the church disaster response plan as needed

#### **d. The Role of the Director of Mission, Service & Justice Ministries**

##### **i. Primary Roles**

1. Serve as the primary contact and communication link between the Disaster Response Committee and the Conference administration by serving as an ex-officio member of the Conference Disaster Response Committee
2. Provide administrative support to the Conference Disaster Response Committee
3. Serve as the administrative official relative to employment of disaster response workers (e.g. case managers) and for the payment of funds

##### **ii. Readiness Phase**

1. Foster an environment that encourages training and preparation for disasters in the Conference
2. Ensure that the Bishop and Cabinet are kept apprised of the need to encourage preparation for disasters

##### **iii. Rescue Phase**

1. Work with the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and the Bishop to determine if an UMCOR Emergency Grant should be requested
2. Provide administrative support as the Conference Disaster Response Committee responds to the disaster

##### **iv. Relief Phase**

1. Provide administrative support as the Conference Disaster Response Committee prepares to respond to the disaster.
2. Monitor disaster response leadership for burnout and stress

##### **v. Recovery Phase**

1. Participate with the Conference Disaster Response Committee to evaluate the need for grant assistance from UMCOR
2. Provide administrative support to apply for and report on UMCOR grants
3. Cooperate with UMCOR leadership to recruit volunteers for the recovery effort

##### **vi. Review Phase**

1. Participate in the after-action review

## **e. The Role of the Conference Communications Office**

### **i. Primary Roles**

1. Provide technical, communications and media support to promote the disaster response effort
2. Assist the Disaster Response Communications Coordinator regarding promotion of disaster response activities

### **ii. Readiness Phase**

1. Provide timely publicity of Disaster Response activities and needs to foster awareness of disaster response in periods when disasters are not in the news
2. Assist with updating and maintenance of information technology assets associated with Disaster Response Ministry

### **iii. Rescue Phase**

1. Increase awareness that the conference is working with those in need by publicizing ongoing preparations and plans
2. Assist in publicizing the impending deployment of Early Response Teams so that ERT members are making plans to deploy when called

### **iv. Relief Phase**

1. Provide information on the need for financial support and the procedures for making gifts to the Conference Disaster Response Fund
2. Provide information to the church regarding in-kind gifts that are needed and in-kind items that are not needed

### **v. Recovery Phase**

1. Provide timely information on the ongoing long term recovery effort in disaster areas and how the church can provide financial support and volunteer workers to assist with home repairs and other recovery activities

### **vi. Review Phase**

1. Participate in the after-action review with a special eye toward the publicity and communication efforts throughout the different phases of the disaster

### **3. Financial Policies and Procedures**

#### **a. Sources of Funds**

- i. Disaster ministry of the Rio Texas Conference is funded from designated gifts to the Conference Disaster Response Fund and from grants. Historically UMCOR has been the primary source of grant funds. It is anticipated that additional sources of grant funds will be required to adequately respond to future disasters.
- ii. Gifts from churches and individuals are the primary way that we fund disaster response within the conference.
- iii. Checks should be made to “Rio Texas Conference” with “Disaster Response Fund” in the memo line.
- iv. Gifts to the Disaster Response Fund may be undesignated or designated to a particular purpose (e.g. a particular disaster or warehouse operations). The Conference Disaster Response Fund is designated as a Conference Advance Special (#2050). The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator will actively encourage support of the disaster ministry through gifts to the Conference Disaster Response Fund. A special Bishop’s Appeal may be requested following especially devastating disasters.
- v. UMCOR grants received by the Conference have included: Solidarity Grants and Recovery Grants. Solidarity Grants, up to \$10,000, are requested by the Bishop based on a budget provided by the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator. Recovery Grants may be for any amount but generally for \$100,000 or less. The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, in consultation with appropriate individuals related to the recovery effort, will apply for these grants. Examples of recovery needs supported by UMCOR include case management, construction management or repair and rebuilding assistance. All grants must be approved and signed by the Mission Vitality Director and the Conference Treasurer.

#### **b. Budget**

- i. A budget will be approved by the Conference Disaster Response Committee each calendar year. The budget will be based on discretionary funds available in the Conference Disaster Response Fund on January 1 of each year. Budgeted expenditures up to \$800 can be authorized by the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator. For budgeted expenditures greater than \$800, the Coordinator must obtain authorization from the Executive Committee. If the Executive Committee cannot agree, the expenditure must be approved by a majority vote of the Conference Disaster Response Committee.

- ii. A revised budget must be approved in order to spend additional discretionary funds that become available during the year. The Disaster Response Committee must approve expenditures in excess of budgeted amounts.
- iii. All disbursements must be approved and submitted by the Director of Mission, Service & Justice Ministries.

**c. Grant Funds**

- i. Grants received must be spent in accordance with the budget approved by the funding agency. Where specific authorization is necessary, the authorization should follow the same protocols as for budgeted funds in the Conference Disaster Response Budget.
- ii. A contingency reserve equal to 15 percent of program expenses involving personnel hired under the grant will be included in the Conference Disaster Response Budget. The reserve is to be used in the event of budget overruns. The Disaster Response Coordinator should monitor grant expenses and report and explain potential budget overruns to the Committee at the earliest possible date.

#### **4. Equipment Inventory Protocols**

The Logistics Coordinator will maintain an inventory of disaster response equipment owned by the Rio Texas Conference.

The Logistics coordinator will assign a permanent identifying number to all equipment valued at more than \$100.00.

Under direction of the Logistics Coordinator, a physical inventory will be conducted at the close of the fiscal year and at the close of deployments. In situations where equipment is deployed for more than six months, an inventory of deployed equipment will be conducted every six months as well as at the close of the deployment.

A procedure will be established for check-out and return of equipment.

## **5. Disaster Response Protocols**

### **a. Relief Phase**

#### **i. Early Response Teams (ERTs)**

1. An Early Response Team is a specialized, trained and credentialed team of volunteers that responds in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, if and when requested.
2. The primary task of the Early Response Team is to provide a caring Christian presence in the aftermath of a disaster. They do this through tasks such as removing debris, installing temporary roof tarps, cleaning out flooded homes and generally trying to stop further damage to property following a disaster.

#### **ii. Advance and Onsite Coordination Teams**

1. When disaster strikes, or when it is obvious that it will strike, the CDRC will activate an Advance Team to manage the initial response by the Rio Texas Conference volunteers. The CDRC will work with District Coordinators and others as needed, to assemble a team to coordinate the initial response efforts. Replacements and additional members will be recruited as needed to manage an extended response.
2. An On-Site Coordinator will be identified and empowered to oversee the response in the affected area. In the event of a large-scale event (one where the response phase is expected to exceed two weeks), the CDRC will activate additional On-Site Coordinators that can give relief to the primary On-Site Coordinator. To do this, it is recommended that a pool of potential On-Site Coordinators be identified, trained and monitored for availability throughout an event. The pool should consist of experienced ERT Team Leaders with deployment experience from all districts of the Rio Texas Conference. Additionally, the CDRC will reach out to other Conference DRCs in the SC Jurisdiction to help fill this role as needed.
3. Roles and responsibilities of the On-Site Coordinator and other members of the Onsite Coordination Team can be found in Appendix E

#### **iii. ERT Call-Out Procedures**

1. Procedures ERT Callout are detailed in Appendix E



**iv. Deployment with Spontaneous Volunteers**

1. Procedures for utilizing Spontaneous Volunteers are detailed in Appendix E

**v. Survivor Self-Response Resource Center**

1. Procedures for utilizing Survivor Self-Response Resource Center are detailed in Appendix E

**b. Recovery Phase**

- i. Teams that deploy to assist in long term recovery are under the general direction of the Conference UMVIM Committee. The role of the Conference Disaster Response Committee is to foster relations with Long Term Recovery Committees and maintain a list of needs for recovery teams. Additionally, the committee may assist with UMCOR funding requests, development of, and participation on Long Term Recovery Committees, coordination and training of Disaster Case Managers related to Long Term Recovery Committees and other roles where disaster response expertise is needed.

## 6. Other Concerns and Procedures

### a. Principle of Cooperative Effort

- i. Rio Texas Disaster Response Ministry works in cooperation with other organizations and government agencies. These may be denominational (e.g. Baptist Men, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and Salvation Army), secular nonprofit (e.g. American Red Cross and Food Bank), or governmental (e.g. Federal Emergency Management Agency, Texas Department of Emergency Management and city and county departments of emergency management). Efforts to promote cooperation are fostered by participation in the Texas Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (TVOAD) and in regional VOADS. Long Term Recovery offers special opportunities for cooperation by participation in Long Term Recovery Organizations. This begins by participating in the organization of these groups after a disaster but extends to cooperation during the recovery. For example, Rio Texas Disaster Response Funds may be used to fund unmet needs identified by the Long Term Recovery Organization's Unmet Needs Committee, or UMCOR funding may be sought for Case Management work in cooperation with the Long Term Recovery Organization.

### b. Training and Equipping

- i. There are various resources available to help equip churches, groups and individuals to do disaster response and recovery better.
  1. **Connecting Neighbors** – This curriculum is designed to help churches in three areas and can be presented to applicable groups in the church as needed:
    - a. Personal Preparedness – Great for small groups to help people begin to prepare for disasters
    - b. Preparing the church – A tool for clergy, administrative staff, trustees or Church Council planning for protection of church facilities, furnishings, equipment and data in the event of disaster.
    - c. Outreach – In the aftermath of disasters, churches are always looked to as a resource and for leadership through difficulty. This segment will help you plan how you can be that “shining light on a hill” in the community.
  2. **Early Response Team**
    - a. Basic training and certification
    - b. Recertification
    - c. Advanced Courses
    - d. On-Site Coordination
    - e. Site Assessment

- f. Team Leader
- g. Cleanout
- h. Wildfire
- i. Chainsaw and Skid Steer Operator
- j. For more information, see Appendix D, go to [www.riotexasresponse.org](http://www.riotexasresponse.org) or contact the Conference Disaster Response Training Coordinator

**c. Donated Goods**

- i. In the aftermath of a disaster, people and congregations who want to help are good at collecting items they hope survivors will need. It is important that only the needed items are collected and a plan is in place to distribute them to those who need it. Useful guidelines to consider before collecting items for disaster survivors include the following:
  1. No clothing! Seventh-day Adventists and other organizations specialize in this area. Donate clothing directly to these organizations
  2. Never send supplies unannounced or unexpected
  3. In-kind (non-cash) donations will be received based on specific needs or otherwise redirected to other agencies
  4. Location for collection/distribution of donated goods will be determined by local coordinator based on available space and specific needs
  5. Cash donations are recommended and should be sent to the Conference Treasurer designated for the Conference Disaster Response Fund (Advance #2050). Donated funds are used in the immediate aftermath of a disaster as well as during long term recovery after a disaster. These funds can also be used to leverage UMCOR and other grants thereby helping even more survivors.

**d. Martinez Disaster Response Center**

- i. The Martinez Disaster Response Center is located at 601 Methodist Encampment Road in Kerrville, Texas, at the edge of the Mount Wesley Conference Center. It serves as a warehouse for disaster response equipment and supplies and a collection and storage site for UMCOR kits.
- ii. The center is a member of the UMCOR Relief Supply Network and serves as an official site for collection, verification, and distribution of UMCOR kits. The center maintains an inventory of kits needed to respond to disasters in the Rio Texas Conference or other conferences.

- iii. Volunteer opportunities are available at the warehouse to help verify, load and unload UMCOR kits, as well as general upkeep and maintenance of the facility. Volunteers should contact the Warehouse Coordinator at [warehouse@riotexasresponse.org](mailto:warehouse@riotexasresponse.org) to make arrangements.
- iv. Groups or individuals wishing to make UMCOR kits are encouraged to consult the UMCOR home page for information on kits needed at any given time (<http://www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies>). A substantial inventory of UMCOR kits is maintained at the center so they are almost always welcome. Please note that any donated kits must be accompanied by the per-kit fee as outlined in the instructions. Checks should be made out to the Rio Texas Conference, with “Martinez Center” in the memo line.
- v. Kits may be delivered directly to the Martinez Disaster Response Center in Kerrville, or the Rio Texas Conference Center in San Antonio. Volunteers should make contact before they are delivered. The Martinez Disaster Response Center does not have full-time staff, so those planning to deliver supplies to Kerrville, should contact the Warehouse Coordinator at [warehouse@riotexasresponse.org](mailto:warehouse@riotexasresponse.org) to make arrangements. Contact the Mission, Service & Justice Ministries office if you plan to deliver them to San Antonio (210-408-4500).

## 7. Appendices

### a. Appendix A – Rio Texas Disaster Response Team Contact Info

<b>Conference Disaster Response Coordinator</b> <b>Eugene Hileman</b> aehileman@riotexas.org - 210-557-8698
<b>District Disaster Response Coordinators</b>
<b>Capital District - Jim Street</b> capital@riotexasresponse.org
<b>Coastal Bend District – Steve Abbatello , John Fry (Assistant)</b> coastalbend@riotexasresponse.org
<b>Crossroads District – Rev. Darin Zumwalt</b> crossroads@riotexasresponse.org
<b>El Valle District – Roland Pecina</b> elvalle@@riotexasresponse.org
<b>Hill Country District - Rick Mergen</b> hillcountry@riotexasresponse.org
<b>Las Misiones District – Larry Rice</b> lasmisiones@riotexasresponse.org
<b>West District - Steve Whitson</b> west@riotexasresponse.org
<b>Additional Committee Members</b>
<b>Director of Mission Service and Justice Ministries – Abel Vega</b> avega@riotexas.org
<b>Martinez Disaster Response Center Coordinator – Larry Altman</b> warehouse@riotexasresponse.org
<b>Disaster Response Communications Coordinator – Leslie Ricks</b> communications@riotexasresponse.org
<b>Disaster Response Administrative Coordinator – JoAnn Lieberman</b> admin@riotexasresponse.org
<b>Disaster Response Training Coordinator – Whitney Maupin</b> training@riotexasresponse.org
<b>Logistics Coordinator - Larry Etter</b> logistics@riotexasresponse.org
<b>Survivor Self-Response Information Center Coordinator - Jack Foreman</b> jack@forespace.com
<b>Member at Large – Javier Leyva</b> pastorleyva@yahoo.com

## **b. Appendix B - Disaster Documentation Maintenance Protocol**

### **i. Background**

1. Collection and maintenance of documentation associated with Disaster Response and Recovery is essential in order for the Conference Disaster Response Committee to properly report the efforts pertaining to a disaster. These data are used for:
  - a. Justification of and reporting for UMCOR funding, as well as overall reporting to the Conference leadership and churches regarding the effort
  - b. Reporting back to the churches in the conference the work being done as a way to “celebrate” what has been done
  - c. Assisting communities to properly track volunteer hours which can be used as local matching funds required for FEMA grants.
2. There are additional documents that are kept by Rio Texas Conference Staff that do not fall under the prevue of this document. Specifically, documents related to UMCOR grants and reporting, as well as legal agreements and obligations.

### **ii. Assignment**

1. The Disaster Response Administrative Coordinator collect and maintain all records pertaining to Disaster Response and Recovery efforts within the Rio Texas Conference, as well as by teams from the Rio Texas Conference working with other conferences. Whenever possible, these records will be collected in digital formats. Any documents collected in hard copy format will be digitized for storage.
2. This will require close coordination with the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, District Disaster Response Coordinators, Cluster Leaders, ERT Team Leaders and On-Site Coordinators. During the event, this will require daily communication to ensure that we capture all of those working in the Conference, including those from outside the Conference working in our area.

### **iii. Document Format**

1. Team Leaders are encouraged to use appropriate technology to capture and send digital images of documents whenever possible. This reduces the amount of paper being tracked, mailed and maintained, and expedites the transmission to the

Conference, while relieving the burden of tracking a lot of paper until the end of the deployment for the Team Leader. One of the best ways to do this is by using a smart phone app such as CamScanner or iScanner. These apps can use the phone's camera to create a pdf formatted document that can be e-mailed immediately.

iv. Documents Required to be Maintained

1. Response Phase

a. ERT Team Leaders should be directed to collect and transmit the following documents

- i. Individual Volunteer Liability Release Forms
- ii. Homeowner Liability Release Forms
- iii. Assessment Forms (if used)
- iv. Daily Work Hours

b. Assessment Team Leaders

- i. Assessment Forms
- ii. Individual Volunteer Liability Release Forms
- iii. Homeowner Liability Release Forms

2. Recovery Phase

- a. Daily Work Hours
- b. All pertinent documents related to Disaster Case Management

v. Document Maintenance Procedures

- 1. The Conference has online capacity for storage of digital copies on an online storage account
- 2. The Conference Administrative Coordinator will manage the archive

vi. Location of Stored Documents

- 1. All scanned documents will be stored on a designated 2 TB RAID 1 redundant drive and kept at a location designated by the CDRC. It will be backed up monthly to a fire-retardant disk drive and continuously accessible to designated personnel via the internet.
- 2. This storage system allows managed, encrypted access to documents by members of the Disaster Response Committee. It facilitates collaboration and sharing of digital assets, while maintaining a centralized repository of documents relating to disaster response. All committee members are granted access to

the system. To ensure integrity of the stored files, access is granted to specific files on a “needs” basis.



c. **Appendix C – Disaster Response Safety Policy**

**CHILD, YOUTH & VULNERABLE ADULT SAFETY POLICY  
MANDATORY STANDARDS FOR THE**

**Rio Texas Conference Disaster Response Ministry**

As adopted by the Rio Texas Conference Disaster Response Committee  
December 11, 2018

**Reducing the Risk of Abuse in the Church**

“Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me” (Mark 9:37 NRSV).

“If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones...it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea” (Matthew 18:6 NRSV).

Call

In response to God’s call to care for the vulnerable, Rio Texas Conference Disaster Response Ministry (RTC-DRM) is committed to the well-being of every person entrusted to its care. This commitment is in harmony with the Book of Resolutions (§162 *Social Principles*) and the baptismal covenant (*United Methodist Hymnal*).

Purpose

As part of the Rio Texas Conference, RTC-DRM is determined to provide an environment in which Participants (as defined herein) are safe from Neglect or Abuse. The scope of this policy and its provisions shall apply to all staff, volunteers, clergy, or lay persons in the RTC-DRM who have direct or indirect contact with Participants (Children, Youth, or Vulnerable Adults). This policy sets forth minimum mandatory requirements for screening and training of clergy, lay, staff, or volunteers. Implementation of mandatory ministry procedures and accountability action is required for all ministry leaders within the RTC-DRM and the Rio Texas Conference.

Commitment

In accordance with the Rio Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church Policy on Child, Youth, and Adult Safety, June 2017, RTC-Disaster Response Committee (RTC-DRC) has adopted the following set of Safety Procedures to be implemented no later than the close of Annual Conference 2018. Copies of both documents can be obtained through the Conference Mission Vitality Center – Outreach Vitality office.

This safety policy meets or exceeds the requirements of the Rio Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church Policy on Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Safety, June 2017 and has been reviewed and approved by the RTC-DRC. Any future revisions shall as a minimum meet or exceed the requirements of the Rio Texas Conference of the

United Methodist Church Policy on Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Safety, June 2017, and be reviewed and approved by the RTC-DRC before implementation.

The RTC-DRM is fortunate to have persons with exceptional talent for teaching and supporting the spiritual nurture of our children, youth and vulnerable adults as is applicable in the ministry. We wish to encourage them to use their spiritual gifts. These safety procedures are for the well-being of our children, youth, and vulnerable adults participating in the RTC-DRM. We recognize that safety is an issue that involves the whole church family, not just those who work directly in ministry with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Therefore, we are asking all of our church family to be informed and help us provide a safe environment for ministry.

### **Definitions**

- A. **Abuse:** is any deliberate act that inflicts bodily or emotional harm to a Participant. Abuse includes: (a) the infliction of physical or emotional injury by other than accidental means; (b) the creation of a risk, or allowing the creation of risk, to a Participant by other than accidental means; (c) committing or allowing to be committed an act of Sexual Abuse, Sexual Exploitation, or prostitution upon the Participant.
- B. **Adult Leader: is any person** including any paid employee, volunteer, clergy, or lay person in the conference, district, or local church who has the responsibility for the care and Supervision of a Participant at an event. Adult Leaders shall no longer be in High School.
- C. **Applicant:** is any person 18 years of age or older seeking to become an Adult Leader in a local church or for a district or conference event.
- D. **Assistant Leader:** is any person 16 years of age or older who has been through the application and safety certification process, but does not qualify for a background check. These are still considered to be Participants and cannot fill the role of a mandatory Adult Leader.
- E. **Day Ministry Event:** is an activity, or occasion sponsored by RTC-DRC that involves a gathering and care of Participants during the hours of 7:00am-10:00pm, and does not occur for more than four hours per day in duration of four or more consecutive days.
- F. **Exploitation:** is obtaining or using another person's income, assets, or possessions with the intent to deprive the person of those resources.
- G. **Neglect:** is failure to provide nutrition, medical, surgical, or any other care necessary for the well-being of the Participants.
- H. **Overnight/Extended Hour Ministry Event:** a local church, conference, or district sponsored activity, or occasion that involves a gathering and care of Participants for more than four hours per day in duration of four consecutive days or involves an overnight stay.
- I. **Participant:** is a Child, Youth, or Vulnerable Adult that is registered, enrolled, attending, or otherwise participating in an event or activity sponsored by RTC-DRC.

1. **Child:** is any person 11 years of age or younger.
  2. **Youth:** is a person 12-17 years of age.
  3. **Vulnerable Adult:** persons over 18 years of age with physical, mental, and/or developmental disabilities.
- J. **Prostitution:** to engage in, to offer to engage, or to force a Participant to engage in sexual contact by either soliciting or receiving a fee or other benefit.
- K. **Rule of Three:** The presence of two unrelated Adult Leaders at all ministry events involving Participants. Any engagement with a Participant requires the presence of two Adult Leaders.
- L. **Safety Policy Administrator:** The Conference Mission Vitality Center – Office of Outreach Vitality Director and Administrative Support Staff will serve as Safety Policy Administrator and are charged with the maintenance, implementation, and enforcement of the RTC-DRM Safety Policy. The Safety Policy Administrator will work with the RTC-DRC to help with this task, but the Safety Policy Administrator retains overall responsibility. The Safety Policy Administrator reports directly to the Conference Director of Connectional Ministries. The main focus of administering the Safety Policy is through the Disaster Response training which will lay out the expectation of compliance with the Safety Policy in the RTC-DRM, the Rio Texas Conference, and the local church’s adopted and adapted Safety Policy per Rio Texas Conference mandate. Trained Early Response Team (ERT) Leaders will be responsible with the administration of the Safety Policy process in connection with the trained ERT Leader’s local church as the ERT’s sponsoring agent.
- M. **Sexual Abuse:** is any sexual contact, sexually explicit language, gestures, or images directed to a Participant.
- N. **Sexual Exploitation:** is any deliberate act that allows or encourages a Participant to engage in an act of obscene or pornographic photography, filming, or depiction of a Participant as prohibited under Texas law.
- O. **Supervision:** is the leadership role of a person who is in charge of a group of Participants, giving direction, setting boundaries, disciplining appropriately, maintaining safety and being the leader in all situations. The ERT Team Leader will apply the local church’s Safety Policy expectation regarding Supervision.

### **SAFE MINISTRY MANDATES**

In accordance with the Rio Texas Conference Safety policy, the RTC-DRC commits to provide adequate Supervision from Adult Leaders. This expectation of adequate provision is outlined in the RTC-DR Team Leader Training Course and materials [See Addendum Document]. The RTC-DRM is ultimately a ministry of the local church from where ERTs originate. Therefore, the expectations of the RTC-DRC Safety Policy compliments, supports, and may possibly exceed the policy of the local church.

The RTC-DRC requires that each ERT have at minimum, 2 non-related persons fully Trusted Con Confianza trained and certified to be bearers and administrators of this Safety Policy during ERT deployments. The 2 fully trained and certified persons should have such standing prior to the execution of the ERT Deployment.

The RTC-DRC encourages that eventually, all local church ERT Team members will be fully Trusted Con Confianza trained and certified. The RTC-ERT Team Leader Training outlines that ideally, the Trusted Con Confianza training and certification process be completed by the entire local church ERT as part of the preparation process prior to ERT deployment.

Early Response Teams are unique in that only adults over the age of 18 are permitted to serve in this capacity. Although this requirement minimizes some of the supervision requirements, these teams are still in contact with children, youth and vulnerable persons in the clients that we serve as well as in the churches where we are housed during deployment.

- A. All ministry events with Participants shall follow the Rule of Three with a minimum of one Adult Leader for every eight Participants. Recommended ratios include: Safe Ratios (following the National Association for the Education of Young Children guidelines for safety):
  - a. infants- 1:3
  - b. toddlers- 1:4
  - c. children- 1:6
  - d. Youth- 1:8
  - e. Special needs: The ERT Team Leader should endeavor to provide a buddy/faith friend for vulnerable adult team members with special needs. This is in addition to the required 2 certified adult minimum.
- B. Any one-to-one mentoring or consulting shall be conducted in sight of another Adult Leader. The ERT will apply the local church's Safety Policy expectation regarding mentoring and consulting.
- C. Adult Leaders and Assistant Leaders working with children and youth must be at least five years older than the oldest Participants with whom they work.
- D. Assistant Leaders must work under the Supervision of two Adult Leaders.
- E. Overnight Ministry Events
  1. Co-ed Overnight Ministry Events require co-ed Adult Leaders.
  2. Sleeping accommodations shall include sleeping distance of no less than three feet between Adult Leaders, Assistant Leaders, and Participants.
  3. Every Participant shall have a completed medical release and parental/legal guardian permission form before they will be permitted to participate at any Overnight Ministry Event.
  4. The ERT will apply the local church's Safety Policy expectation regarding expected practices and overnight ministry events.
- F. Travel
  1. Only Adult Leaders will be permitted to drive Participants to ministry events. Drivers must be:
    - a. 21 years or older
    - b. have a valid driver's license
    - c. proof of insurance at the state's minimum limits

- d. not be otherwise disqualified from driving (i.e., under medication, impaired, etc.).
  - 2. Written permission from a parent/legal guardian is required for events requiring transportation to and from the event location.
  - 3. The ERT will apply the local church's Safety Policy expectation regarding expected practices for driving.
- G. Phone, video, and online communication:
- 1. Adult Leaders must notify parents/legal guardians before requesting access, friending, texting, contacting a Participant via social media, or using any other form of online phone/video communication.
  - 2. Using the Rule of Three, all group or social media communications must include two Adult Leaders who serve as administrators/moderators. All groups must be closed, private, and shall require the site administrator's approval to join.
  - 3. The ERT will apply the local church's Safety Policy expectation regarding expected practices for phone, video, and/or online communication.
  - 4. Adult Leaders shall not photograph Participants for use on internet or in print media without written permission of parent/legal guardian. A Social Media best practice resource will be provided by the Mission Vitality Center. The ERT will apply the local church's Safety Policy expectation regarding expected practices for photography.

## **IMPLEMENTATION: SCREENING, TRAINING, AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

### **A. SCREENING**

- 1. Adult Leaders and Assistant Leaders shall submit an application for ministry along with three (work, volunteer, or ministry) references.
- 2. Applicants should be active in the local church/ministry for a minimum of six months prior to the event or provide additional references affirming their positive leadership with Participants in another ministry setting. In the case of new staff hires, references deemed adequate by the hiring supervisor will replace the six-month waiting period. In the case of Adult Ministry Leaders or Assistant Leaders, previous ministry experience within the Rio Texas Conference may be transferred in lieu of the six-month waiting period pending approval of Rio Texas Conference office.
- 3. References shall be checked by conference, district, or local church staff responsible for Applicants.
- 4. Adult Leaders shall:
  - a. Submit a signed authorization form for a criminal background screening to be completed by the Rio Texas Conference office every two years. This will include a signed statement that they are not aware of any allegations that would prevent them from working with Participants.

- b. If results of the screening raise questions about fitness of the Applicant, the Rio Texas Conference office shall disapprove the application and notify the event leader and/or local church. Results of criminal background screenings shall be kept confidential. Applicants can request that the conference office share the results of their criminal background screening with another district or local church in the Rio Texas Conference via a signed request authorization form.
5. The ERT will apply the local church's Safety Policy expectation regarding expected practices for screening.

## **B. TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION**

All Adult Leaders and Assistant Leaders must be certified for their work at conference, district, and local church events. Certification includes:

1. Evaluation of and submission of the local church policy every year. As local church leaders undergo the ERT Team Leader Training, the training will make references to the local church's Safety Policy.
2. Completion of Abuse prevention training every year.
3. Safety Certification every two years. Certification will include the following modules:
  - a. Overview of Rio Texas Conference policy.
  - b. Abuse prevention.
  - c. Creating safe spaces, best practices for ministry, sexual ethics and appropriate leader behavior.
  - d. Overnight/extended hour ministry training.
  - e. The certification process will be designed by the Rio Texas Conference and will be offered by trained persons in every district.
4. The Conference Mission Vitality Center – Office of Outreach Vitality Director and Administrative Support Staff serve as Safety Policy Administrator for the RTC-DRM. There is no advanced Team Leader training. Pertaining to DR Leader trained persons and ERT Team members:
  - a. The Safety Policy Administrator is responsible for accessing the conference database to determine if RTC-DRM volunteers are Trusted Con Confianza trained and certified as documented in Safe Gatherings.
  - b. The ERTs local church Safety policy Administrator shall ensure that each Adult Leader reviews the provisions of this Safety Policy at least annually.
  - c. The ERT's local church Safety Policy Administrator shall participate in the reporting of all allegations of abuse.

## **C. ACCOUNTABILITY**

1. Every ministry of the Rio Texas Annual Conference, district, and local church shall have a policy that is compliant with the minimum standards of this Rio Texas Policy and must review their policy annually.

2. The Mission Vitality Center at the Rio Texas Conference office will work alongside district staff to ensure that policies are adopted and followed.
3. The Rio Texas Conference Uniting Table in consultation with the Conference Mission Vitality Center shall be responsible for reviewing and revising the Rio Texas Child, Youth and Vulnerable Adult Safety Policy.
4. Local churches shall submit their policy and a report on how they are in compliance with their policy annually to the District Superintendent at their charge or church conference.
5. Clergy shall document the date and facilitator when they complete safety certification to their District Superintendent annually via the annual inventory/clergy consultation form.
6. District staff will annually submit a report to the Mission Vitality Center and Office of Intergenerational Discipleship, identifying churches who are in compliance with this policy and/or those still in need of a policy or training.
7. The Mission Vitality Center will work with districts and local churches to keep track of and ensure all conference, district, and local church ministries are in compliance with this policy.
8. A copy of the conference procedures shall be retained in the Rio Texas Conference office.

### **REPORTING ABUSE**

The RTC-DRC procedures for reporting Abuse are as follows:

- A. All reports of alleged Abuse should be documented in writing and brought immediately to the attention of the local church's ERT leaders. The ERT leader will then be responsible to inform the local church's senior pastor and per the local church's Safety Policy protocols for reporting abuse. Likewise, the RTC-DR Safety Policy Administrator should be informed of the situation. Texas is a mandatory reporting state. Reports of Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation or Sexual Exploitation of Participants shall be made within 48 hours of suspicion to the Department of Family and Protective services through the Texas Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400 or [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org). Adult Leaders shall report all abuse by anyone- No Abuse should be considered trivial and not reported.
- B.** Any Adult Leader or Assistant Leader accused of Abuse shall be immediately relieved of duties related to any conference, district, or local church event.
- C. In the case of Abuse allegations, the senior pastor, District Superintendent, and/or Bishop shall be notified immediately. Parents or legal guardians should be notified in appropriate circumstances.
- D. It shall be the goal to provide supportive care to both the victim and the accused and to restore such persons to wholeness. The RTC-DRC and the local church shall provide a supportive atmosphere to all those who are affected, offering both objectivity and empathy as it seeks to create a climate in which healing can take place. Supportive care can include the procedures of the criminal justice system, provisions of the current Book of Discipline, appropriate counseling referrals and continued pastoral visitation.

E. Statement to the Media: *The* Conference media center has guidelines available for communications with media about the incident(s) which may have been reported.

***It is a privilege to work with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Great responsibility is required. Those who violate this policy shall immediately be removed from contact with children and youth. Appropriate authorities shall be notified immediately.***

### ***Addendum Information***

In addition to the *Trusted* protocols, Early Response Team volunteers are trained by authorized UMCOR trainers and are issued UMCOR ERT Badges. These UMCOR-issued badges demonstrate our UMCOR affiliation to civil authorities working in disaster response and often times allow us early entry into affected areas not accessible to unaffiliated volunteers or even residents. As such, UMCOR requires that every badged volunteer pass an additional background check. These background checks are administered by UMCOR and are good for three years.



## Rio Texas Conference ERT Process

### COORDINATION & TRAINING

1

#### Individuals

- Complete ERT Basic training
- Complete UMCOR Background Check
- Are badged for three years

**Note:** ERT Training includes discussion of *Trusted* policy and participants are encouraged to complete the three-part *Trusted* certification process.

2

#### Individuals are encouraged to

- Join /form ERT in their local church or
- Connect with a nearby team
- Pursue ERT Advanced Training (Team Leader, Site Assessment, Cleanup,)

**Note:** Team Leader training emphasizes need for *Trusted* training within the team membership in order to deploy.

### DEPLOYMENT PREPARATION

3

#### Local Church Team Leaders:

- Complete Team Leader training, and gain understanding of their role in *Trusted* compliance
- Verify *Trusted* training and compliance of Team Members through the local church
- Encourage Team Members to complete *Trusted* certification
- Query team members for availability to deploy
- Determine who will fulfill the ratios needed for deployment
- Conduct *Trusted* briefing and training with team members

4

#### Individual ERTs:

- Complete *Trusted* Training and notify Team Leaders of compliance

### DEPLOYMENT

5

#### Local Church Team Leader

- Registers Team for deployment,
- Identifies by name and date trained for the *Trusted*-compliant Team Members who will be fulfilling the required ratios.

#### **d. Appendix D - Training and Badging Protocols**

##### **i. ERT Basic Training and Badging**

- 1.** Members of ERT teams must be at least 18 years old
- 2.** Trained ERT team members receive an UMCOR badge.
- 3.** To receive a badge
  - a.** Trainees must complete the entire training course.
  - b.** The class must be taught by authorized UMCOR trainers.
  - c.** Individuals must submit to a criminal background check as designated by UMCOR. This background check is distinct from that required through *Trusted con Confianza* training and cannot be substituted.
- 4.** When questions are raised in background checks they are reviewed by the Assistant to the Bishop, the Director of Outreach Vitality and the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator to determine the individual's suitability for service as an Early Response Team member. They may determine the individual is eligible without restriction, eligible with restrictions or not eligible to serve.
- 5.** Badges expire after three years and must be renewed, including a new background check. (See recertification protocols below.)
- 6.** Teams will deploy in accordance with the Disaster Response Safety Policy (Appendix C).
  - a.** The current conference policy states that at least two members of every ERT will be trained and compliant with the conference safety policy. For teams of 16 members and less, this will fulfill the required 1:8 ratio. Those who are untrained may still deploy with a current ERT badge, as long as the ratios are maintained.

##### **ii. Early Response Recertification Protocols**

- a.** Early Response Team members receive badges when they complete the ERT training class and an UMCOR background check. This badge is valid for three years, at which time they must be recertified. Team members should begin the recertification process at least a month before their expiration date printed on their badge. If more than six months has elapsed after the badge has expired, the volunteer will be required to retake the Basic ERT Class in person.
- b.** In the Rio Texas Conference, ERT recertification requires an UMCOR background check and candidates must

complete additional training. This training requirement may be fulfilled by any of the following:

- i. Complete the facilitated UMCOR-approved ERT Recertification training (either in-person or via webinar).
- ii. Retake the Basic ERT training class

**iii. Chain Saw Safety Training Protocols**

1. Chain Saw Safety Training is done by the Rio Texas Conference. The following protocols are established relative to chain saw operation by Early Response Teams.
2. Only Conference trained chain saw operators may operate chain saws.
3. A current ERT Badge is required in order to be designated as a chain saw operator.
4. Chain saw operators must be at least 18 years old. (This is the minimum age for ERT members.)
5. Chain saw operators must complete the chain saw safety training including the following elements:
  - a. Classroom instruction in chain saw safety, maintenance, operation and cutting procedures.
  - b. Field demonstrations of chainsaw operation and cutting procedures by qualified instructors.
  - c. Hands on instruction for volunteers in chainsaw operation and cutting procedures.
6. Operators must use all personal protective equipment including helmet, ear protection, eye protection, steel toed shoes, protective chaps, and approved gloves when operating a chain saw.
7. Only Conference owned or approved chain saws may be used.
8. A Permission to Enter Property and Liability Waiver must be signed by the property owner before a chain saw crew can work on a site.
9. Each chain saw operator must sign a Liability Waiver before deploying on a chain saw team.
10. Each chain saw crew must have a designated safety officer who will monitor safety procedures on the work site.
11. Chain saw crews must abide by all ERT protocols adopted by the Conference Disaster Response Committee.

#### **iv. Skid Steer Training Protocols**

1. The following protocols are established by the Rio Texas Disaster Response Committee related to the use, transportation and safe operation of the conference owned skid steer.
  - a. All operators must have completed the skid steer operator's class conducted by the Conference Disaster Response Committee.
  - b. All operators must accrue additional time operating the skid steer to maintain proficiency within three years of initial qualification. Failure to do so will necessitate retraining.
  - c. All operators must sign a Rio Texas Conference liability release form.
  - d. Two trained operators must be present when the skid steer is being operated.
  - e. The skid steer must be transported on the conference owned trailer designated for that purpose.
  - f. Only trucks equipped with electronic breaks compatible with the trailer breaks may be used to pull the trailer.
  - g. For distances of greater than five miles, a properly equipped three-quarter ton truck (or larger) must be used to pull the trailer.
  - h. A properly equipped one-half ton truck may be used to pull the trailer for distances of less than five miles.
  - i. The skid steer may only be "checked out" by operators who have had a minimum of four hours operating experience and training on loading and unloading the machine from the trailer.
  - j. Any person checking out the machine is responsible for daily maintenance.

#### **v. Disaster Response Just in Time Training**

1. **ERT Basic** – In the event of a major disaster that results in a large demand for ERT Basic classes, it is recommended that we utilize ERT trainer(s) from outside of the Rio Texas Conference in order to free up our trainers to better engage in the initial response efforts. The Rio Texas Conference will expect to pay for transportation and lodging costs associated with the training. In order for this to be successful, we will need to augment the trainers with:
  - a. Administrative Support
  - b. Pre-class registration and paperwork preparation
  - c. Classroom set up and preps

- d. Day of class registration and check-in
- e. Badge Photographs
- f. Lunch and snacks
- g. Post-class paperwork
- h. Conference-Specific Guidance
  - i. Trusted con confianza
  - ii. PowerPoint slides
  - iii. Handouts
  - iv. Verbiage of the Rio Texas Conference policies
  - v. Deployment processes
  - vi. Advanced training opportunities

**vi. ERT Advanced Training** – Direct existing ERTs to take advantage of available online training

- 1. ERT Recertification
- 2. ERT Site Assessment
- 3. ERT Team Leader
- 4. Cleaning Out Flooded Homes
- 5. ERT Wildfire
- 6. Utilize RTC Trainers to train On-Site Coordinators and help to set up on-site command centers

**vii. Non-ERT Training** – Provide training and support at the conference and on-site locations for non-ERT roles

- 1. Conference Call Center Volunteers
  - a. E-mails
  - b. Script
  - c. Points of Contact to direct callers to
  - d. FAQs
- 2. On-site Administrative Volunteers
  - a. E-Mails
  - b. On-site paperwork
  - c. Phones
- 3. Volunteer Coordination
  - a. On-site hosts
- 4. Logistics Support
  - a. Flood bucket collection, verification, distribution
  - b. Transporting trailers and equipment
  - c. Transporting materials

### **viii. Spontaneous Volunteer Training**

1. It is anticipated that the majority of Spontaneous Volunteers would be used to supplement ERTs in mucking out homes and/or dealing with debris removal. Prior to deploying Spontaneous Volunteers into homes of survivors, it is required that at least a minimum level of training be accomplished for each volunteer.
2. While the training may fall under the purview of the On Site Manager, it is recommended that the training be conducted by someone who is well versed in the work needed, in order to ensure that volunteers are properly prepared for the tasks at hand, as well as ensuring that they operate safely, as representatives of the Rio Texas Conference.
3. If available, the majority of the training can be accomplished with a short (30 minute) video that has been produced for just this purpose. It is recommended that the video be shown on a laptop computer, in conjunction with a projection system or large screen television in order to train as many volunteers simultaneously as possible. In the event that the requisite equipment isn't available, it can be done following the outline below.
4. In all cases, Spontaneous Volunteers should be reminded that they will be deployed under the supervision of badged and experienced ERT Team Leaders. These Team Leaders will provide guidance and have the last word as to the work that is done.
5. Cleanout For Non-ERT Volunteers Training Video Outline
  - a. Introduction
  - b. Homeowner Participation
    - i. Release form must be signed before beginning
    - ii. No photos of them or their home – protect their privacy
    - iii. Ask about insurance/FEMA registration before starting
    - iv. Help survivors understand the need to document the damage before gutting the home
  - c. Health Risks
    - i. PPE
    - ii. Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult policy
    - iii. Watch for structural damage
    - iv. Danger of lead & asbestos

- v. Carbon Monoxide danger with generators
  - vi. Immunizations
  - vii. Danger of electrical shock
- d. Before entering home
- i. Visual inspection of structure for safety
  - ii. Look for home off foundation
  - iii. Look for sagging roof (indicates structural issues)
- e. Salvage and debris removal
- i. What can/cannot be saved
  - ii. Decision is up to the homeowner
  - iii. Save/discard piles
  - iv. Safe place to secure things that are being saved
  - v. How And where to pile debris for pickup
- f. Mucking out the home
- i. Ventilate the home
  - ii. Determine water level
  - iii. Determine where to cut drywall
  - iv. Start at the back and move toward the door
  - v. Remove flooring
  - vi. Remove door and baseboard trim
  - vii. Cut drywall
    - 1. Box Cutter
    - 2. Oscillating saw
    - 3. Rotary saw
  - viii. Removal of insulation
  - ix. Remove screws/nails
  - x. Remove mold
    - 1. No Bleach!
    - 2. Scrub with soapy water and brush
  - xi. Treat with Shockwave or other mold inhibitor, if available
  - xii. Dryout home

e. **Appendix E – Deployment Protocol**

**i. ERT Call-Out Procedures**

Early Response Teams or individuals trained for early response should not self-deploy. The Conference Disaster Response Committee and UMCOR have established the following protocols and procedures for deploying Early Response Teams

1. When a disaster occurs, the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator will direct the ERT Deployment Coordinator to send a “heads up” email to ERTs.
  - a. Generally, the initial notification will come at the onset of the disaster during the rescue phase, alerting ERTs to prepare
    - i. Church team leaders and cluster leaders should reach out to their people and encourage initial planning
    - ii. Individuals should make preparations and communicate their availability to the church team or cluster leader
  - b. District Disaster Response Coordinators and Cluster Leaders are encouraged to reach out to those in their areas and reinforce the impending needs and to encourage participation
2. After consulting with the District Disaster Response Coordinator and local authorities, the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator will issue a call for ERTs to deploy at the appropriate time and approved locations.
3. The call for deployment will provide details about registration of team or individuals, on-site coordination of ERTs for the event and information about overnight accommodations for ERT members.
4. Procedures for forming teams made up of individuals and partial teams will be developed to provide opportunities for all trained individuals to deploy. ERTs need to remember that the Response Phase will last from several days to weeks. Even if they cannot respond initially, there will likely be additional opportunities, and they should plan to respond as they can.

**ii. On-Site Coordination.**

This appendix is designed for use during the Response Phase following a disaster within our conference. While every disaster will be different, this is designed to give those responding a template from which to work. Every disaster is different and will require a different response.



The following resources are to be considered as a guide and not a “hard and fast” set of rules. Those responding should use what is needed or helpful, but not feel required to use everything listed below.

### **1. Organizational Structure**

The Organization Chart on page 8 of this manual shows additional On-site Coordination Team which may be established in the event of a disaster to facilitate the additional workload. Each of these various functions may be filled by different individuals, or multiple functions may be performed by a single person, depending on the scope of the disaster and the required response. **Each function should be considered and filled as needed.**

### **2. Description of Additional Support Structure Basic Roles and Responsibilities**

This section is designed as a guide for those tasked with the various functions. It can be used for just-in-time training as people are pulled into fulfill the various roles. The various functions are guidelines and should be modified to fit the specific situation. In all cases, communication, coordination, flexibility and common sense will be required to ensure that the response is effective and efficient.

#### **a. On-Site Coordinator**

**Note:** Although most small-scale disaster events can be managed by a single On-Site Coordinator, there will always be the need for them to have a break from their duties, even if for a couple of days. In the event of a larger disaster event, there needs to be replacements trained and ready to step in after several weeks of work. It is imperative that there is a cadre of people trained and ready to step into this role as needed.

- i. Reports to Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
- ii. Manages and deploys ERTs
- iii. Manages the day-to-day response functions near the disaster site
- iv. Oversees Record-Keeping and maintenance/distribution of documentation
- v. Oversees non-ERT volunteers
- vi. Acts as the liaison between ERTs and the affected community

## vii. Team Deployment

1. A major part of the role is the deployment of Early Response Teams (ERT). These may be teams from the Rio Texas Conference, or may be from other conferences. They have all been trained under UMCOR guidelines and should know what to do.
2. One of the things that may need to be done early on is ERT Site assessment (In some cases the community or other relief organizations may assist with this). The ERT Deployment Coordinator should work with the On-Site Coordinator to recruit and deploy ERT site assessors. Effective site assessment will help to prioritize the work. There is an online ERT Site Assessment course available to conduct just-in-time training and the assessment forms are printed in the appendix of this manual.
3. Another major role will be to make ERT work assignments. Based on site assessments, as well as needs that come from other sources, team skills should be matched with the homeowner needs.

## viii. Trusted con Confianza Compliance

1. The current conference policy states that at least two members of every ERT will be trained and compliant with the conference safety policy. For teams of 16 members and less, this will fulfill the required 1:8 ratio.
2. For further clarification, please refer to Appendix C

## ix. Overall Coordination

1. In addition to ERT coordination, the On-Site Coordinator is responsible for the overall coordination of the site.
2. Coordinate with the Host church for such issues as:
  - A. Access for volunteers and teams to the facility
  - B. Daytime and after-hours

- C. Conformance with Safe Gatherings guidelines
- D. Office space
- E. Housing of teams
- F. Restroom, kitchen and shower access

x. Record Keeping

Ensure to maintain good records and stay informed. High volunteer turnover is common, often without notice. Make sure that volunteers are trained to do things correctly, that good written records are kept on site and that there is a method to pass down all information at the end of each day.

1. Establish a system to keep good notes on everything.
2. Information and requests will be overwhelming if there isn't a plan to capture and organize it all.
3. The On-Site Coordinator is responsible to ensure that all team paperwork is filled out, collected and forwarded in a timely manner.
4. Daily management of team records (especially Daily Work Logs) is required.

xi. On-Site Volunteers.

Non-ERT volunteers can assist with functions such as

1. On-Site Housing Coordination
  - A. Hosting teams
  - B. Coordinating housing with the church or other facilities
2. On-Site Administrative Support
  - A. Collecting and maintaining forms relating to teams and survivors
  - B. Answering phone calls and e-mails
  - C. Maintaining records and databases
3. On-Site Logistics Support
  - A. Acquiring team supplies
  - B. Repositioning supplies and assets

xii. Community Liaison

1. The On-Site Coordinator is the face of United Methodist Disaster Response in the affected community
2. Working with survivors, Emergency Managers and ERTs the On-Site Coordinator will need to connect people together.
3. Compile a reference sheet of community contacts. A form to start with is located in the appendix.
4. **MAKE NO PROMISES** to survivors and brief the teams to do likewise.

#### xiii. Initial Considerations

1. Remember – This is a Marathon – Not a Sprint.
2. Dedicated office space is needed for at least several weeks. Whether it is in a church or somewhere else, strive to establish a space to work out of.

#### xiv. Resources

1. The Conference Disaster Response Committee is comprised of people who have experience with disasters – Contact information is in the appendix A
2. The UMCOR 200 Level course – “Management of Early Response Team Volunteers On-Site Management” provides some very good guidance on what you should expect. It is available through the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator or the Training Coordinator.
3. UMCOR Advanced Training is available online for Site Assessment, Team Leaders and Cleaning out Flooded Homes. Access the courses at [riotexasresponse.org](http://riotexasresponse.org)
4. Recruit Volunteers from the local congregation and community. People want to help and many are physically unable to do the ERT work, but can make and answer phone calls, help with filing and paperwork,

host teams staying at the church and a variety of other tasks.

5. Utilize Team Leaders and Site Assessors to help determine where to work and lead teams. Many can also be utilized to fill in as On-Site Coordinator if needed.
6. The Conference has Disaster Response Trailers & Tools. Arrange to have the trailer and/or tools pre-positioned nearby to provide access to them. The available tools include:
  - A. Basic tools for ERT muckout, tearout and tarping.
  - B. Chainsaws and associated equipment (for use only by trained chainsaw operators)
  - C. Skid Steer (for use by trained operators)
  - D. Generators
  - E. Additionally, there are usually masks, suits, gloves and other Personal Protective Equipment available on the trailer.
7. UMCOR Cleaning Kits (also known as Flood Buckets) can be transported for distribution to the community. The kits contain a variety of cleaning supplies to be used by the survivors in helping to clean up their home. The kits are a great “ice breaker” to hand a survivor when meeting for the first time. They are not intended for use by ERTs
8. As needed, portable storage containers can be located on site to store supplies and tools.
9. Expenses – There will be expenses associated with the response work. Purchases need to be pre-approved by the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, who has access to necessary funds. If the On-Site Coordinator opts to use personal funds to make authorized purchases, original receipts will be required for reimbursement.

10. The Conference can help with office Supplies and Equipment. Arrangements can be made for the use of a laptop computer and cell phone. Additionally, it is recommended that a conference-provided e-mail account is used instead of personal e-mail. As the need for other supplies becomes evident, the ERT Deployment Coordinator can help with acquisitions.
11. There are some online tools that will help you as well. Conference ERT Database, Crisis Cleanup and DIRRT are tools that we have at our disposal to help contact ERTs, track volunteers, homeowners that need assistance and other aspects of the disaster response efforts.
12. Forms (found in Appendix I)
  - A. Community Contact Form
  - B. Site Assessment Forms
  - C. Daily Work Hours Form
  - D. Volunteer Liability Release Form
  - E. Homeowner Liability Release Forms (English & Spanish)
  - F. Volunteer Liability Release Form
  - G. Volunteer Medical Release Form

### **iii. On-Site Administrative Support**

1. Reports to the On-Site Coordinator
2. Provides administrative support as needed, but may include
  - a. Gathering paperwork from teams
    - i. Participant Liability Release Forms
    - ii. Participant Medical Forms
    - iii. Homeowner Liability Release/Work Order Forms
    - iv. ERT Site Assessment Forms
    - v. Team Daily Work Logs
    - vi. Fielding telephone calls and e-mails with incoming teams
    - vii. Communicating needs to higher authority

### **iv. On-Site Logistics Support**

1. Reports to the On-Site Coordinator
2. Provides logistics support as needed, but may include
  - a. Gathering supplies needed by teams

- b. Gathering and distributing UMCOR Relief Kits
- c. Relocating Tool and Equipment Trailers

**v. On-Site Housing Support**

- 1. Reports to the On-Site Coordinator
- 2. Provides housing support as needed, but may include
  - a. Seeking out housing options in the affected community
  - b. Coordinating housing with local church(es) or local housing facilities to house incoming teams
  - c. Hosting and briefing newly arrived teams
    - i. Get them settled into their space
    - ii. Brief on Safety Policy and Guidelines
    - iii. Define open and closed spaces on the church campus
    - iv. Discuss and special programs that the teams may have to work around (preschool, Weeknight programs, Sunday Worship, etc.)
  - d. Communication of needs or problems with host facility
  - e. Ensuring that teams abide by housing facility guidelines

**vi. Off-Site Administrative Support**

- 1. Reports to Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
- 2. Provides administrative support outside of the affected area (normally at the Rio Texas Conference Office)
- 3. Provides administrative support as needed, but may include
  - a. Answering phone calls relating to the disaster response (see Frequently Asked Questions below)
  - b. Answering e-mails
  - c. Tracking expenses
  - d. Performing clerical duties as needed

**vii. Pandemic Protocols**

- (a) The following safety procedures were put in place as a precaution during the COVID 19 crises. These guidelines should be used during future pandemic events as well. Participants in all deployments are asked to be prepared to follow these protocols as needed:
  - (i) Temperature Check at the start of the day
  - (ii) Wear N-95 Face masks
  - (iii) Use hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes as much as possible

**viii. Deployment with Spontaneous Volunteers**

- 1. The Disaster Response Committee of the Rio Texas Conference continues to support Early Response Teams as the best way to

meet its mission of providing a caring Christian presence in the aftermath of disaster during the relief phase of a disaster. The committee also recognizes the value of providing an opportunity for spontaneous volunteers to serve on organized teams with badged ERT team leaders. It is anticipated that Spontaneous Volunteers will be used primarily in muck out and clean up efforts and should not be used for tasks not covered in the training. To this end, the following protocols for deploying spontaneous volunteers have been adopted.

2. Conference Disaster Response Committee will:
  - a. Provide training material for spontaneous volunteers;
  - b. Provide personal protective equipment for trained spontaneous volunteers that we deploy:
    - i. Masks
    - ii. Gloves
  - c. Provide tools and supplies needed for clean-up operations for teams that we deploy:
    - i. Water
    - ii. Cleaning equipment
    - iii. Mold treatment
3. The Conference Disaster Response Training Coordinator will:
  - a. Put Spontaneous Volunteers information into the ERT database;
  - b. Invite volunteers to participate in Early Response Training when it is available;
4. On-Site Coordinator will:
  - a. Assist volunteers to complete required forms;
  - b. Conduct Rio Texas Spontaneous Volunteer Training as needed;
5. Team Leaders will:
  - a. Have a current ERT badge (team leader training is preferred);
  - b. Be current on Trusted con Confianza certification;
  - c. Provide leadership and direction to teams;
  - d. Assure that safety protocols are being observed;
  - e. Assure that Permission to Enter Property forms are complete before team work begins;
  - f. Check out and return Conference equipment;
  - g. Submit work logs of the volunteers as required;
6. Spontaneous volunteers will:
  - a. be 18 years old or older;



- b. complete required registration and deployment forms
  - i. Personal information form
  - ii. Medical information and release form
  - iii. Liability release form
  - iv. Work log;
- c. complete Rio Texas Conference Spontaneous Volunteer Training;

## Hurricane Deployment Protocol Chart

### Day Zero minus 3 - Hurricane projected to enter Gulf of Mexico

Who	Action
Conference DR Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with Disaster Response Committee</li> <li>• Contact possible Advance Team and On-Site Coordinator candidates to determine who may be available</li> <li>• Brief Bishop and Cabinet on the situation</li> <li>• Brief DS and pastors in affected area(s) as needed</li> <li>• Address readiness issues</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
Training Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make preparations for Just-in-Time Training</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
Communications Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact Conference Media personnel</li> <li>• Prepare initial correspondence to district offices, churches and volunteers</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
Warehouse Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief CDRC on Cleaning Kit inventory and any needs or concerns</li> <li>• Solicit volunteers to verify cleaning kits as needed</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

## Hurricane Deployment Protocol Chart

### Day Zero minus 2 - Hurricane continues to propose a threat to Rio Texas Conference

Conference DR Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief Bishop and Cabinet on the situation</li> <li>• Brief DS and pastors in affected area(s) as needed</li> <li>• Communicate with Disaster Response Committee</li> <li>• Contact possible Advance Team and On-Site Coordinator candidates to determine who may be available</li> <li>• Identify possible coordination sites</li> <li>• Coordination Calls (Include Committee, DS, Advance Team candidates and Onsite Coordinator candidates)</li> </ul>
Logistics Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inventory &amp; test equipment,</li> <li>• Anticipate projected needs</li> </ul>
ERT Deployment Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send Get Ready Notice to ERTs</li> </ul>
Resource Center Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inventory Resource Center, obtain and test computer equipment</li> </ul>
Warehouse Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inventory Supplies</li> </ul>
Training Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make preparations for Just-in-Time Training</li> </ul>
Communications Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with Conference Communications Office personnel as needed</li> <li>• Communicate status via website, social media, etc.</li> <li>• Refine initial correspondence to district offices, churches and volunteers</li> </ul>
District Coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ID Possible locations for team housing</li> <li>• ID possible alternate shower locations</li> </ul>

## Hurricane Deployment Protocol Chart

### Day Zero minus 1 - Hurricane continues to propose a threat to Rio Texas Conference

Conference DR Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief Bishop and Cabinet on the situation</li> <li>• Brief DS and pastors in affected area(s) as needed</li> <li>• Communicate with Disaster Response Committee</li> <li>• Refine OSC Candidates</li> </ul>
DR Logistics Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ID Who can move equipment when the need arises</li> <li>• ID possible storage location for forward deployed materials</li> </ul>
District DR Coordinators/ On-Site Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put local churches on alert</li> <li>• ID Possible OSC Basecamp(s)</li> <li>• Coordination Calls</li> <li>• ID Possible locations for team housing</li> <li>• ID possible alternate shower locations</li> </ul>
Training Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make preparations for Just-in-Time Training</li> </ul>
Communications Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with Conference Communications Office personnel as needed</li> <li>• Communicate status via website, social media, etc.</li> <li>• Refine initial correspondence to district offices, churches and volunteers</li> </ul>
ERT Deployment Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send initial plea to ERT Site Assessors</li> </ul>

## Hurricane Deployment Protocol Chart

### Day Zero – Hurricane makes landfall in Rio Texas Conference (Begin of Emergency Phase - May last several days depending on the disaster)

Conference DR Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief Bishop and Cabinet on the situation</li> <li>• Have Bishop request UMCOR Solidarity grant, as needed</li> <li>• Brief DS and pastors in affected area(s) as needed</li> <li>• Communicate with Disaster Response Committee</li> <li>• Initiate Final Planning for Relief phase per “Disaster Response Ministry Manual”</li> </ul>
DR Logistics Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate Final Planning for Relief phase per “Disaster Response Ministry Manual”</li> </ul>
On-Site Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate Final Planning for Relief phase per “Disaster Response Ministry Manual”</li> </ul>
On-Site Logistics Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate Final Planning for Relief phase per “Disaster Response Ministry Manual”</li> </ul>
Training Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make preparations for Just-in-Time Training</li> </ul>
Communications Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with Conference Communications Office as needed</li> <li>• Communicate status via website, social media, etc.</li> <li>• Communicate with district offices, churches and volunteers</li> </ul>
ERT Deployment Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send Call out to ERTs and Site Assessors</li> </ul>
District DR Coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination Calls</li> </ul>

## Hurricane Deployment Protocol Chart

### Day One – Beginning of relief phase - Dispatched teams can safely move into affected area

Conference DR Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief Bishop and Cabinet on the situation</li> <li>• Brief DS and pastors in affected area(s) as needed</li> <li>• Communicate with Disaster Response Committee</li> <li>• Communicate needs to SCJ</li> <li>• Conference call with affected churches and pastors</li> <li>• Visit affected site(s)</li> <li>• Advance Team Deploys</li> <li>• Coordination Call (Include Committee, DS, Advance Team and Onsite Coordinator)</li> </ul>
District DR Coordinators/ On-Site Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setup “On-Site Coordination Team” Area</li> </ul>
On-Site Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with local governments and churches</li> <li>• Deploy Assessors to affected communities</li> </ul>
Resource Center Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Resource Center and Just-in-Time Training Site</li> <li>• Participate in MARC as needed</li> </ul>
District DR Coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit affected site(s)</li> <li>• Coordination Calls</li> </ul>
ERT Deployment Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage ERT Registrations and forward to OSC</li> </ul>
Training Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make preparations for Just-in-Time Training</li> </ul>
Communications Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with Conference Communications Office as needed</li> <li>• Communicate status via website, social media, etc.</li> <li>• Communicate with district offices, churches and volunteers</li> </ul>

## Hurricane Deployment Protocol Chart

### Day One (Continued) – Beginning of relief phase - Dispatched teams can safely move into affected area

DR Logistics Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reposition equipment and supplies to affected areas</li></ul>
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## Hurricane Deployment Protocol Chart

### Day Two and following days as needed

Conference DR Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with Disaster Response Committee</li> <li>• Monitor and support response effort as needed</li> <li>• Brief Conference call with affected churches and pastors</li> <li>• Coordination Call (Include Committee, DS, Advance Team and Onsite Coordinator)</li> </ul>
On-Site Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support local community</li> <li>• Coordinate with local governments and churches</li> <li>• Provide feedback to Rio Texas Disaster Response Committee</li> </ul>
District DR Coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination Calls</li> <li>• Back-fill Onsite Coordination Team as needed</li> </ul>
ERT Deployment Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage ERT Registrations and forward to OSC</li> </ul>
Communications Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with Conference Media personnel as needed</li> <li>• Communicate status via website, social media, etc.</li> <li>• Communicate with district offices, churches and volunteers</li> <li>• Seek out “celebration stories” and share if appropriate and with permission</li> </ul>
Resource Center Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage Resource Center and Just-in-Time Training Site</li> <li>• Participate in MARC?</li> </ul>
Training Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage Just-in-Time Training</li> </ul>



**f. Appendix F – Volunteer Hosting Considerations**

- i. Following are some suggested “Talking Points” that churches should address if they are considering hosting volunteer teams in their facility. These considerations are based on the being primarily ERTs that are coordinated through the Rio Texas Conference. Churches may also consider extending hospitality into long-term recovery
- ii. The Rio Texas Conference Disaster Response Ministry strongly recommends that church do NOT serve as shelters for survivors without a previously arranged agreement with agencies such as the American Red Cross.
- iii. Considerations
  1. Office space for On-Site Coordinator and volunteer coordination
  2. Hosting volunteer teams
    - a. Showers for men and women
    - b. Separate dormitories for men and women
    - c. Kitchen Facilities
    - d. Cost recuperation
    - e. Facility Security
    - f. Trusted Policy Compliance
    - g. Time limits for hosting volunteers
  3. Utilizing local volunteers
    - a. Hosting
    - b. Volunteer Coordination
    - c. Administrative
      - i. Phones
      - ii. Data Entry
    - d. Meals
- iv. Donations – It is recommended that churches NOT encourage or accept donations of ANY material goods. Donations are often considered “The disaster after the disaster”, as they place more of a burden on the community than they help. If people want to give financial donations, they can probably be best used through the Conference Disaster Response Fund, where they can be added to other donations and used where best needed to aid survivors

**g. Appendix G – Survivor Self-Response Resource Center Management**

- i. The Center should be manned by a minimum of two volunteers at all times. At least one current ERT should be available to answer questions
- ii. The contents of the center are minimized to allow movement as needed to reach the survivors.
- iii. Use the provided form to capture as much information from the survivors as possible
- iv. Annotate what supplies were distributed (tarps, cleaning kits, etc.)
- v. Tarps for roof leaks should be distributed only after the survivors have watched the video and received the accompanying leaflet
- vi. Provided computer equipment should be used for
  1. Administrative functions
  2. Internet access for survivors for FEMA registration, etc.
  3. Access to Crisis Cleanup
  4. Printing forms
  5. Showing how-to videos to survivors
- vii. The center and all contents should be safeguarded at the end of each day.
- viii. The Center and all contents need to be returned to the Rio Texas Conference when no longer needed. Contact the Logistics Coordinator to arrange pickup
- ix. Computers should be pre-loaded with
  1. Microsoft Word and Excel
  2. Internet Browser
  3. How-to Videos
    - a. Tarping
    - b. Cleanout
- x. Following are the current forms and handouts used with the Resource Center:
  1. Forms
    - a. Disaster Response Local Contact Information Sheet
    - b. Disaster Response Survivor Assistance Form
  2. Handouts (in English and Spanish):
    - a. How to Tarp a Roof
    - b. Como cubrir un techo
    - c. Debris Removal
    - d. Remoción de escombros
    - e. Mold Removal
    - f. Moho
    - g. Muck and Gut
    - h. Como limpiar una casa inundada
    - i. Safety
    - j. Seguridad en el lugar de trabajo
- xi. The handouts and forms can be downloaded from [riotexasresponse.org](http://riotexasresponse.org)



## **h. Appendix H - Frequently Asked Questions**

### **i. Disaster Preparation**

#### **1. Q: How can I personally be better prepared for a disaster?**

A: Get Connecting Neighbors training through the Conference or District Disaster Response Coordinator. More information can be found at <https://riotexasresponse.org/connecting-neighbors/> You can also find information at <http://www.redcross.org/get-help/prepare-for-emergencies/be-red-cross-ready>.

#### **2. Q: How can my church trustees and staff prepare for the next disaster?**

A: Contact the Conference or District Disaster Coordinator about Connecting Neighbors, module 2. More information can be found at <https://riotexasresponse.org/connecting-neighbors/>

#### **3. Q: Should my church have a Disaster Response Coordinator?**

A: It is a good idea, but not required. The District and Conference Disaster Response Coordinators can help you decide and train someone for this role.

#### **4. Q: What should we do if a disaster is imminent?**

A: Safeguard lives and property as much as possible - You can get information through the Conference or District Disaster Response Coordinator

### **ii. Early Response Teams (ERT)**

#### **1. Q: What is ERT?**

A: Early Response Teams are specially trained teams that provide a caring Christian presence and assist survivors stop more damage in the immediate aftermath of a natural disaster. They are issued identification credentials that help them get access into affected communities as early as possible to assist survivors.

#### **2. Q: Should my church have and Early Response Team?**

A: It isn't required, but is a great way to respond to hurting neighbors after a disaster. Individuals can get the training by going to [riotexasresponse.org](http://riotexasresponse.org) and registering for an upcoming class.

**3. Q: I am the only ERT in my church, but I want to respond. How can I get connected with a team that is deploying?**

A: Go to [riotexasresponse.org](http://riotexasresponse.org) and register yourself as an individual by clicking on the 'Volunteer For ERT' option. We will work to connect you with a team or team leader that is scheduled to work in the affected areas

**4. Q: I am not ERT qualified. Can I deploy with an ERT from my church?**

A: While our primary goal is to put trained ERTs into an affected area, we do have provisions to augment these teams with spontaneous volunteers. These volunteers are only deployed with proper training, and under the leadership of badged ERTs. More information can be found in Appendix E

**5. Q: I was an ERT, but my credential expired. Can I still deploy?**

A: Go to [riotexasresponse.org](http://riotexasresponse.org) and recertify your training. There will be a delay in getting your badge to you, but depending on the community you may still be able to deploy without one, once your background check has cleared.

**6. Q: I can't find my ERT badge. Can I still deploy?**

A: That depends on the community. If law enforcement is limiting access to only affiliated volunteers, you may not be able to get access. Register yourself at [riotexasresponse.org](http://riotexasresponse.org) and annotate that you don't have your badge. We can help to get you n if possible.

**7. Q: I am interested in getting ERT trained. Where can I register for training?**

A: All planned training is posted at [riotexasresponse.org](http://riotexasresponse.org).

**iii. Non-ERT Volunteers**

**1. Q: I am not physically able to do ERT work. Is there another way that I can help after a disaster?**

A: There may be. Depending on the severity of the disaster and the number of volunteers available, there is often need for help with sorting donations, logistics and administrative functions.

**2. Q: Why aren't we sending people into a disaster area immediately after the disaster?**

A: There are several reasons why volunteers are delayed in getting into an affected area. The first priority is that of saving lives, locating survivors and ensuring the safety of the area. First Responders (police, fire, etc.) need to finish their work before anyone else is allowed into the area. As soon as it is possible and we have permission, we will be sending teams in to assist.

**3. Q: How can my church respond after a disaster?**

A: Being a caring Christian presence in the community goes a long way. Connecting Neighbors has some great suggestions - Contact the District or Conference Disaster Response Coordinator for more info.

**4. Q: I want to help rebuild homes after a disaster. How do I go about volunteering?**

A: Long-Term Recovery continues for months or years after a disaster, and there is almost always a need for volunteers. For current needs in our conference, go to [riotexasresponse.org](http://riotexasresponse.org) and click on 'Volunteer'

**iv. Donations**

**1. Q: Where does the Conference receive funding for Disaster Response?**

A: Primarily from donations - Rio Texas Conference Disaster Response is not funded through apportionments, nor any other means than donations by individuals, churches or districts. We do also receive funds from UMCOR, but they are often offset by donations (see the UMCOR section below)

**2. Q: I have some things to donate to disaster survivors. Where should I send them?**

A: Unless it is something that has been specifically requested, it is best to NOT donate any items. Oftentimes communities are crippled by unwanted donations on top of dealing with the disaster. If you have something that has been specifically requested, the affected community should provide guidance.

**3. Q: What should my church do with funds given in response to a disaster?**

A: Usually the best thing to do in the immediate aftermath is to pass them on to the Conference Disaster Response Fund. Unless you know of a specific family in your community that needs financial support, the

greater need will come months later. Oftentimes there is a lot of money being handed out immediately following an event, but when most funds will be needed is in the months ahead when rebuilding begins.

**4. Q: How should donated funds be designated when given to the district or conference?**

A: Designating funds for “Disaster Response” gives the conference the greatest leverage in using them effectively, while ensuring that they go to those who most need them. While you may want to give to “Tornado Survivors” or “Flood Buckets”, doing so limits how they can be spent.

**5. Q: How does the conference leverage donated funds?**

A: When UMCOR gives grants for disaster response, they usually require that the conference pay a percentage as well. Donated funds can therefore be put up as that percentage, allowing us more funds to help survivors.

**v. UMCOR**

**1. Q: Where is UMCOR after a disaster?**

A: In your church and in your community – As members of the United Methodist Church in our communities, WE are UMCOR. UMCOR primarily provides training, management oversight and funding for disaster Response and recovery. They provide funds for hiring construction supervisors and disaster case managers who walk along survivors until they are back on their feet. The hands and feet of UMCOR are in the pews of our churches.

**2. Q: How are the UMCOR Funds used?**

A: In numerous ways - They provide emergency grants that are used in the immediate aftermath to assist communities. They are also used to hire trained case managers and construction managers to assist survivors. They are also used to fund “unmet needs” when there are no funds for rebuilding from other sources.

**vi. Survivors**

**1. Q: How do I get help rebuilding my home?**

A: It is recommended that you contact the local Long-Term Recovery Group in your city or county. If not already in place, a group will form in the community and will be the organization through which resources will be distributed. The LTRG will more than likely employ Disaster

Case Managers who will walk with survivors through the recovery process.

i.

**2. Q: How do I get help immediately after a disaster?**

A: Every survivor should contact their insurance company and register with FEMA as soon as possible. The city or county Emergency Manager or Emergency Operations Center should put out information on where survivors can find immediate relief.

**3. Q: I am a disaster Survivor. How can the United Methodist Church help me?**

A: Typically the Rio Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church provides Early Response Teams in the immediate aftermath of the disaster to help with the initial cleanup. Additionally, we often are involved in a variety of ways throughout the recovery process. Individual churches in and around the affected communities may provide other forms of relief.

**4. Q: My church or parsonage was damaged in a disaster. What should I do?**

A: Contact your insurance provider. Normally resources collected by the conference or UMCOR for disaster response are not used to repair church-owned properties.

**5. Q: What should I be doing while I wait for help after a disaster?**

A: First, you should be proactive and seek assistance. Especially in a large-scale disaster where many families are affected, you should let your needs be known. Secondly, you should contact your insurance provider as soon as possible and document the damage as completely as possible before any work is done on the property.

**6. Q: What is the cost associated with help from the Methodist Church Disaster Response?**

A: Normally there is no cost to the homeowner for services provided by Early Response Teams immediately after a disaster. This is a ministry of the local churches and our way of helping those in need. Later, when it is time for rebuilding, there will certainly be costs to the homeowner, but that may be mitigated by the use of volunteer labor and grants that come from a variety of agencies.

**7. Q: I'm not a Methodist or Christian. Can I still get help?**

A: Absolutely! Our help is offered to any disaster survivor with no strings attached or questions asked.





i. **Appendix I – Disaster Response Forms**

**Community Contact Form**

City Emergency Manager \_\_\_\_\_

County Emergency Manager \_\_\_\_\_

Other Relief Agencies Working in the Community \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Multi Agency Relief Center (MARC) \_\_\_\_\_

Disaster Resource Center (DRC) \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Resource Center (VRC) \_\_\_\_\_

FEMA VAL (Volunteer Agency Liaison) \_\_\_\_\_

State VAL \_\_\_\_\_

FEMA Registration Information \_\_\_\_\_

# ERT Daily Work Log

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Location (Address) \_\_\_\_\_

Homeowner Name \_\_\_\_\_

Team Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Description of work \_\_\_\_\_

Team Member	Start Time	Stop Time	Tasks (See descriptions below)

Tasks: Ashout, Assessment, Chainsaw/Tree Debris, Mold Treatment, Muck & Gut/Household Debris Removal, Skidsteer, Tarping/Patching, Other (Specify)

Please specify the number of hours for each task for each volunteer

Brief narrative of the day’s work (include any follow-up needed)

---



---

**TEAM LEADER: Please complete this form DAILY and forward to the Rio Texas Conference.**

**Please e-mail to [admin@riotexasresponse.org](mailto:admin@riotexasresponse.org)**  
 You can use a phone app such as i-Scanner or CanScanner to produce pdf files that can easily be sent

Rio Texas Conference Disaster Response, 16400 Huebner Road, San Antonio, TX 78248  
[Riotexasresponse.org](http://Riotexasresponse.org)

# ERT Site Assessment Form

*NOTE*

*This form is not intended to assess a home for repairs or rebuilding. It is used solely to assess whether or not it is an appropriate situation for an average Early Response Team or whether the situation is better suited for the services of specialized teams or professions.*

*This form can be used to guide the ERT in their goal to help survivors "prevent further damage".*

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of home: \_\_\_\_\_

# of rooms \_\_\_\_\_ # Occupants \_\_\_\_\_ Currently occupied  Y  N

Date of this assessment \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Assessor \_\_\_\_\_

Home Owner (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Homeowner signature \_\_\_\_\_

Contact information \_\_\_\_\_

Is this the first assessment for this residence?  Y  N

If no, who did first? \_\_\_\_\_ when? \_\_\_\_\_

Access to property form signed?  Y  N

Has insurance company been contacted?  Y  N FEMA  Y  N (800-621-3362)

STEP CODE: **ST** = Special Team/skills needed **E** = Early Response Team appropriate **P** = Professionals recommended

Degree of damage: On scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being minor and 5 being major, heavily damaged, rate any space you note as damaged.

<input type="checkbox"/> Own <input type="checkbox"/> Rent	<input type="checkbox"/> Single Family Home <input type="checkbox"/> Multi Family Dwelling <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Home	Chainsaw Needs <input type="checkbox"/> Priority <input type="checkbox"/> Routine <input type="checkbox"/> Not Needed	Blue Tarp Needs <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Primary Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Can Residence be occupied? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				

Foundation: Pier  Slab  Crawl space  Basement  \_\_\_\_\_ # Bedrooms \_\_\_\_\_ Stories

Water: City  Well  On  Off  Main shutoff or well location \_\_\_\_\_

Septic: City  Septic  Location of septic field \_\_\_\_\_

Electric: On  Off  Location of fuse box \_\_\_\_\_

Gas: City  On  Off  Propane  Location of main shutoff \_\_\_\_\_

Water level in house \_\_\_\_\_

Appliances that were immersed H/W  Furnace  W/D  Sump pump  Dishwasher  AC

AC type (window or whole house) Other \_\_\_\_\_

Area	Item	Description	Damaged	Degree	Un-Damaged	Suspect	CODE	
<b>Site</b>		Overall appearance						
		Electrical wires/hook up						
		Gas hook up/tank						
		Septic tank/fields						
		wells						
		debris						
		fencing						
		Sidewalks/driveways						
		flammables						
	yard							
<b>Exterior Assessment</b>	Roof	Shingle						
		metal						
		Slate/tile						
		other						
	Foundation	Type						
	Walls	Brick/stone						
		siding						
		block						
		Windows						
Doors								
<b>Interior Spaces</b>	Walls	Composition						
		drywall						
		plaster						
		paneling						
		other						
		Water height Ft.      Inches						
	Floors	Hardwood						
		carpet						
		other						
<b>Interior Spaces</b>	Ceilings							
	Cabinetry	Kitchen						
		Bath						
	Appliances	Refrigerator						
		Stove						
Other								
<b>HVAC</b>		Furnace						
		Duct work						
		other						
<b>Other</b>								

Additional Comments

# Medical Information for Individual Volunteers

(Every volunteer needs to fill out this form)

Please complete the following and give to mission leader. **MISSION TEAM LEADER SHOULD RETAIN THIS FORM ON SITE TO USE IN CASE OF EMERGENCY.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Dates of mission trip \_\_\_\_\_

1. Blood type \_\_\_\_\_

2. Information about any prescriptions I use: \_\_\_\_\_

3. I am allergic to: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Name of Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

a. Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

b. City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

c. Phone (Work) \_\_\_\_\_ (Home) \_\_\_\_\_

d. Relationship to Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_

5. My health Insurance Company is \_\_\_\_\_

a. Policy Number \_\_\_\_\_

6. Physical Limitations or concerns:

7. I am a diabetic Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

8. I have a history of seizures Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

9. Please provide other helpful health information:

10. I consider myself healthy enough to fulfill my responsibilities on the mission team Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

I \_\_\_\_\_ (volunteer's signature), authorize \_\_\_\_\_ (Team Leader) to consent to any examination, anesthetic, medical diagnosis, surgery, or treatment and/or hospital care rendered under the general supervision and on the advice of any physician or surgeon licensed to practice medicine by the state in which they practice, during the duration of the trip identified above and further authorize the release of medical information from my personal medical records for the following purposes:

\_\_\_\_\_ but I do not give permission for any other use or re-disclosure of this information.

## Participant Liability Release

---

Please read before signing, as this constitutes the agreement as a volunteer and the understanding of your working relationship with the Rio Texas Conference Disaster Response Ministry.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge and state the following:

I have chosen to travel to perform Early Response Team duties designed to help with disaster damage.

I understand that this work entails a risk of physical injury and often involves hard physical labor, heavy lifting and other strenuous activity; and that some activities may take place on ladders and building framing other than ground level. I certify that I am in good health and physically able to perform this type of work.

I understand that I am engaging in this project at my own risk. I understand that this is a "grass roots" activity to support individuals adversely affected by \_\_\_\_\_ Disaster. I assume all risk and responsibility for any damage or injury to my property or any personal injury, which I may sustain while involved in this project and related to medical costs and expenses.

In the event that my supervising disaster organization arranges accommodations, I understand that it is not responsible or liable for my personal effects and property and that it will not provide lock up or security for any items. I will hold it harmless in the event of theft or loss resulting from any source or cause. I further understand that I am to abide by whatever rules and regulations may be in effect for the accommodations at that time.

By my signature, for myself, my estate and my heirs, I release, discharge, indemnify and forever hold Rio Texas Conference, together with its officers, agents, servants and employees, harmless from any and all causes of action arising from my participation in this project, and travel or lodging associated therewith, including any damages which may be caused by its negligence.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Work team or dates covered by this liability form \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Person to contact in case of an emergency \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Witness \_\_\_\_\_

Organization or church name \_\_\_\_\_

16400 Huebner Road

San Antonio, TX 78248-1693

**Work Order and Statement of Understanding for Access to Property**

Description of the scope of work to be completed: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
--

(I/We) indicated by (my/our) signature(s) below, (I'm/We're) the home owner(s) of the property indicated below. (I/We) give permission to the employees and/or associates of the organization indicated above and its affiliated members to work on (my/our) property for the purpose of making repairs to (my/our) home.

(I/We) understand that the above organization and affiliates carry insurance for the persons who are on assignment and that coverage is limited to work-related accidents. (I/We) understand that said organization and its affiliates do not have insurance coverage for protection against legal claims or liability damage suits that might arise in their work on (my/our) home and property. Therefore, in consideration of the services rendered, or to be rendered, on the premises indicated below, (I/We) hereby waive any and all claims or demands that may arise or accrue to (me/us), growing out of any action or omissions by said organization and/or any of its members or helpers in rendering such service and specifically covenant not to sue it or them for any of said act or omissions.

I **authorize / do not authorize (circle one)** United Methodist Disaster Response to use still or video images of my property for future disaster recovery efforts.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Head of Household (signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse (signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Identification #/Type

\_\_\_\_\_  
Identification #Type

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
United Methodist representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



16400 Huebner Road

San Antonio, TX 78248-1693

**Descripción del trabajo a realizar y  
Declaración De Aceptación Para Acceder A La Propiedad.**

**Descripción del trabajo a realizar:**


(Yo/Nosotros) como lo indica (mi/nuestras) firmas en la parte de abajo. (Soy/Somos) los propietarios de la casa o terreno que se localiza en la dirección que se indica en la parte inferior de este documento. (Yo/Nosotros) damos permiso a los voluntarios de la organización que se indica en la parte inferior de este documento y a sus miembros afiliados a trabajar en (mi/nuestra) propiedad con el fin de ejecutar labores de limpieza, remover escombros, reparar o construir en (mi/nuestra) casa, vivienda o terreno. Entiendo que dicha organización y sus afiliados no cuentan con una cobertura de protección de un seguro en contra de demandas legales o un seguro contra demandas de daños que pudieran resultar de su trabajo en (mi/nuestra) casa, propiedad o terreno.

e cualquier manera, en consideración por los servicios rendidos o que serán prestados (yo/nosotros) manifiesto que no presentaré ninguna demanda o reclamo o acción o difamación en contra de dicha organización o sus miembros afiliados que puedan resultar por la ejecución de sus labores que fueron acordados o por trabajos que pudieran quedar inconclusos.

Autorizo / no autorizo (círculo uno) a United Methodist Disaster Response a usar imágenes fijas o de video de mi propiedad para futuros esfuerzos de recuperación de desastres.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Firma/Cabeza Del Hogar

\_\_\_\_\_  
Firma/Esposo o Esposa

\_\_\_\_\_  
# Tipo de identificación

\_\_\_\_\_  
# Tipo de identificación

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dirección

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ciudad

\_\_\_\_\_  
Estado

\_\_\_\_\_  
C. Postal

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representante de Grupo Voluntario

\_\_\_\_\_  
Fecha

j. Appendix J – Additional Resources

Organization	Website	Facebook
<b>UMC</b>		
UMCOR	<a href="https://umcmmission.org/umcor/">https://umcmmission.org/umcor/</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/UMCOR">https://www.facebook.com/UMCOR</a>
UMVIM	<a href="https://umcmmission.org/united-methodist-volunteers-in-mission-2/">https://umcmmission.org/united-methodist-volunteers-in-mission-2/</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/umvim/">https://www.facebook.com/umvim/</a>
SC Jurisdiction UMC VIM/DR	<a href="https://www.scjumc.org/mission2/">https://www.scjumc.org/mission2/</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/scjumc">https://www.facebook.com/scjumc</a>
Rio Texas Conference	<a href="http://www.riotexas.org">www.riotexas.org</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/RioTexas">https://www.facebook.com/RioTexas</a>
RTC Disaster Response	<a href="https://riotexasresponse.org">https://riotexasresponse.org</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/RioTXDR">https://www.facebook.com/RioTXDR</a>
Texas Conference	<a href="https://www.txvoad.org/">https://www.txvoad.org/</a>	
Central Texas Conference	<a href="https://www.ctcumc.org/disasterresponse">https://www.ctcumc.org/disasterresponse</a>	
North Texas Conference	<a href="http://www.ntcmissonaloutreach.org/">http://www.ntcmissonaloutreach.org/</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/ntcdisasterrelief/">https://www.facebook.com/ntcdisasterrelief/</a>
Louisiana Conference	<a href="http://www.louisianadisasterresponse.com/">http://www.louisianadisasterresponse.com/</a>	
<b>NGOs</b>		
National VOAD	<a href="https://www.nvoad.org">https://www.nvoad.org</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/NVOAD/">https://www.facebook.com/NVOAD/</a>
Texas VOAD	<a href="https://txvoad.communityos.org/cms/home">https://txvoad.communityos.org/cms/home</a>	
Central Texas VOAD	<a href="http://centraltxvoad.com">centraltxvoad.com</a>	
American Red Cross	<a href="http://www.redcross.org/">http://www.redcross.org/</a>	
Crisis Cleanup	<a href="https://www.crisiscleanup.org/">https://www.crisiscleanup.org/</a>	
<b>Government</b>		
Texas Dept of Emergency Management	<a href="https://www.tdem.texas.gov/">https://www.tdem.texas.gov/</a>	
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	<a href="https://www.fema.gov/">https://www.fema.gov/</a>	

<b>Long Term Recovery Groups</b>		
Bastrop County Disaster Recovery Team	<a href="https://www.bcltrt.org/">https://www.bcltrt.org/</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/BCDRC/">https://www.facebook.com/BCDRC/</a>
Blanco River Regional Recovery Group	<a href="http://www.br3t.org/">http://www.br3t.org/</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/BR3Volunteers/?fref=ts">https://www.facebook.com/BR3Volunteers/?fref=ts</a>
Coastal Bend Disaster Recovery Group	<a href="https://www.coastalbenddrg.org/">https://www.coastalbenddrg.org/</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/CBDRG/">https://www.facebook.com/CBDRG/</a>
Mission Border Hope (Eagle Pass)	<a href="http://www.missionborderhope.org/">http://www.missionborderhope.org/</a>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/mborderhope">https://www.facebook.com/mborderhope</a>
Travis Austin Recovery Group	<a href="https://targroup.wordpress.com/">https://targroup.wordpress.com/</a>	
Victoria County LTRG	<a href="https://victorialtrg.org/">https://victorialtrg.org/</a>	
Medina County Disaster Recovery Team		