



An UMCOR Partner

## **Disaster Response Policy and Procedures**

*A ministry of compassion and care*

***Great Plains Conference  
of The United Methodist Church***  
100 S. Kansas, Topeka, Kansas 66603

Approved by  
Disaster Response Team 4.30.2025  
Connecting Council 5.10.2025

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## Section 1: Introduction

### *Purpose*

*“Now when Jesus saw the crowds, He had compassion for them because they were troubled and helpless . . . “Matthew 9:36*

The Great Plains Disaster Response is a Ministry of Compassion and Care that has theological, material, mental health, advocacy, and social service components designed to provide for the spiritual, emotional, and physical recovery of disaster survivors and for the well-being of their caregivers. The Conference Disaster Team and Plan exists for the purpose of responding to natural or man-made disasters of such magnitude that they overwhelm a community’s ability to recover on its own and additional help is requested by the community.

Operating consistently within the United Methodist Committee on Relief’s (UMCOR) philosophy, this is not a first-response organization, but one which stands ready to assist communities within the Great Plains Conference geographical area over the long haul of their relief and recovery, until they are well on their way to establishing a “new normal” after a disaster. While the local community leads their disaster relief and recovery, this organization and plan will enable others outside the local community to also participate in the healing following a disaster.

Like UMCOR, when possible, this ministry cooperates with other aid organizations to extend its reach. This manual provides an organized structure with these components included to guide our disaster response efforts.

### *A Good Samaritan Ministry*

The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37) tells of the responses of two religious officials and a man from Samaria to a man on the roadside who had experienced “a personal disaster”. The Samaritan held no known religious office, and was, in fact, of a race despised and considered “unclean” by those arrogant officials. When the three were confronted with a call to care, it was the Samaritan who answered the call and got the approving nod from Jesus. He performed his caring ministry at some personal cost and risk.

This story is a powerful reminder to any who profess to be followers of Jesus Christ. When disaster strikes and strangers lie wounded, Christians (lay and clergy) are called to respond, setting aside personal agendas and embracing inconvenience in order to offer compassion and care, always at some personal cost and risk. Christians are some of God’s designated caregivers, urged by Jesus to “go and do likewise”.

For years United Methodist Disaster Response efforts have represented a significant ministry locally, nationally, and globally. This compassionate and caring ministry is an effort to respond to all survivors – the elderly, adults, children and anyone (handicapped, disfranchised, non-English

speaking, etc.) with special needs. It is the goal of this ministry that in the midst of their situational turmoil all the affected people will experience God's grace and mercy through the response efforts of this ministry.

Disasters can erode or strain relationships of those affected with their churches, families, communities, and with God. *All response efforts are to be made in the spirit of building and restoring relationships, taking care not to cause further stress.*

### ***Putting People First***

Putting people first means taking a whole-community approach to disaster response planning. It means using lenses of equity, accessibility, and inclusion to identify the needs of populations who may not have had their needs met during previous disasters due to past policy decisions or gaps in planning assumptions and considerations.

Putting people first also means including underserved populations in the planning process, since they are the experts on their needs, unique risks, and vulnerabilities. Being truly inclusive is an ongoing process that involves the following:

- Listening to and empowering people from all parts of the community, particularly those from underserved communities, enables them to participate in the planning process.
- Revising plans, policies, and other guidance to reflect the priorities and needs of the whole community.
- Ensuring ongoing awareness and evaluation as communities' characteristics and needs change over time.

People are complex. No individual or population can be described by a single characteristic. Therefore, we consider how identities may combine or overlap in the lived experiences of individuals and communities. (Adapted from *Planning Considerations: Putting People First*, FEMA, December 2024)

### ***Why a Conference Plan is Necessary***

Why prepare for disaster? Because we have seen many disasters in the past and we know that they can, and will, strike again. No region is immune to natural, or human caused disasters. We have communities that are subject to tornadoes, wildfires, ice storms, and floods. It is still easy for us to think that we are disaster free when it doesn't happen to us. Every area in the United States is vulnerable to flooding, windstorms, fire, airplane crash, toxic spill, nuclear accident, civil unrest, and now, sadly, terrorism. So, it is never a matter of *if* disaster strikes, but when!

Unfortunately, many, well-intentioned Christians delay, complicate, and confuse recovery efforts because they operate by impulse rather than with planning, training, and coordination. Aid is often duplicated while the genuine needs of other survivors are overlooked.

Worse yet, sometimes “good doing” can inflict additional harm. This most often happens as helpers rush to do home repairs. Untrained volunteers do not understand the law, insurance assessment procedures, or how certain repairs made too hastily can jeopardize a survivor’s health, such as when flood damage is covered over before interior segments of walls and floors dry completely. Without training, well-intentioned volunteers can imperil a survivor’s health as well as eligibility for financial assistance from insurance and the government.

There are moral and legal reasons to be prepared. *If we take seriously our ministry to relieve suffering, then we Christians must do all we can to prevent further victimization of already hurting people.*

### ***Increasing Vulnerability to Disasters in the United States***

- In the Great Plains Conference any of the following disasters could take place at any given time:
  - Extreme temperatures
  - Floods
  - Severe Storms (all seasons)
  - Wildfires
  - Power Outages
  - Terrorism
  - Radiological
  - Biological
  - Mass Casualty
  - Drought
  - Earthquake
  - Pandemic
  - Hazardous spills
- Most rail lines and highways go through the heart of towns and cities, carrying an ever-expanding quantity of hazardous chemicals and radioactive materials.
- Social/Economic and Governmental Changes:
  - Cities have spilled out onto disaster prone areas.
  - Many insurance companies no longer conduct business in traditionally disaster-prone states, citing the tremendous cost of repair. Insurance companies are no longer paying the homeowner what they have paid in to cover their homes for repairs. Many Americans of all ages now look to governmental and non-governmental aid as their sole source of help after a disaster.
  - Because of the increased effectiveness of governmental and non-governmental agencies in responding to major disasters in the United States, many citizens now expect the same degree of reaction to their disaster, no matter how small. Expectation of an agency’s performance is higher, and tolerance of incompetence is lower.

- Because of the exorbitant cost of recovery in the past decade, the federal government has enacted legislation requiring communities and homeowners to take steps to reduce their risk of future damage in order to be eligible for governmental assistance the next time a disaster occurs. By law, any home rebuilding or repair effort we undertake must now include these new risk reduction requirements.

### ***Disaster Response Life Cycle***

The evolution or “life cycle” of a disaster is best described as an ebb and flow series of community disruptions. There are four degrees of magnitude in terms of size/impacts and three commonly recognized stages of disaster response (rescue, relief, recovery). While United Methodists respond at all levels and phases, we are most active during the relief phase. Each disaster phase is typically 10 times longer than the previous phase, so if the rescue phase lasts 3 days, the relief phase will be 30 days and the long-term recovery phase 300 days.

### ***Four Levels of Disaster Magnitude***

*Geography and the amount of devastation determine the extent of response and classification as a disaster “level”. Each level has a direct correlation to whether or not and what type of help will be needed beyond the local community.*

- *Level 1 Disaster:* A local or localized small disaster affecting one to roughly 30 households. The determining factor of involvement beyond the local church: Is this within the ability of the local church(es) to respond to with little or no conference and the United Methodist Committee of Relief (UMCOR) assistance? Local Clergy advise the District Superintendent and the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator when the relief efforts exceed the local congregations’ resources. The local Emergency Manager may also request assistance from the Conference Disaster Response Ministry during this phase.
- *Level 2 Disaster:* A medium-sized disaster affecting about 30 – 150 homes. The determining factor for involvement beyond the local church: Is this beyond the ability of the local congregation(s) and community(s) to respond? If the answer is yes, the Conference Disaster Response Ministry will respond. Local Clergy advise the District Superintendent and the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator when the relief exceeds the local congregation(s) resources. The local Emergency Manager may also request assistance from the Conference Disaster Response Ministry during this phase.
- *Level 3 Disaster:* A large disaster which could be caused by widespread and/or long-term damage. Disasters of this size in terms of geography and/or severity are sometimes eligible to receive a State Disaster Declaration and/or a Presidential Disaster Declaration. These size of disasters will call for each current and credentialed Early Response Team (ERT) member to deploy along with Safe Gatherings Verified Volunteers. We do not self-

deploy and await an invitation from the County Emergency Management before volunteering.

- *Level 4 Disaster: A Catastrophic Disaster*, which is defined by Public Law 93-288, as “An event resulting in a large number of deaths and injuries; extensive damage or destruction of facilities that place an overwhelming demand of state and local response resources and mechanisms; a severe impact on national security facilities and infrastructures that sustain them; a severe long-term effect on general economic activity and severe effects on State, Local, and private sector initiatives to begin and sustain initial response activities”. Martial law may be declared and access to the impacted areas will be severely limited for sometimes up to weeks following the disaster. Following an invitation from the Local Emergency Manager the entire current, credentialed ERT volunteers will be deployed. A conference-wide appeal from the Bishop for funds, appropriate in-kind donations, and volunteers will be made.

### ***Three Phases of Disaster Response***

When a disaster happens, the response moves through phases with the first being the rescue or emergency phase with efforts that provide emergency care and secure the disaster site. That is followed by the relief phase of getting individuals into short-term housing, clean-up, taking measures to protect what is salvageable, and developing plans to rebuild or provide permanent repairs. The last phase is long-term recovery when homes and communities are rebuilding and making those permanent repairs.

1. ***Rescue or Emergency Phase:*** Lead by trained and professional state and local emergency management groups, this phase begins at the time of impact and continues until all search and rescue/recovery is completed, power is either shut off, and the scene is considered safe.
  - a. State and/or local Emergency Management, fire departments, and law enforcement groups protect life and property, get people out of harm’s way and take action to stop further destruction.
  - b. Emergency medical care is provided for the injured.
  - c. Mental health and/or spiritual counseling is provided.
  - d. The local community takes action to care for each other, their families and neighbors.
  - e. American Red Cross, Salvation Army, and other agencies open shelters, organize mass feeding, clothe survivors, and provide emergency medical care.
  - f. Great Plains United Methodist ERTS get involved at this phase to assist Emergency Managers with Damage Assessments, and to provide congregational and neighbor-to-neighbor care.
  - g. The local United Methodist Churches who, prior to the disaster have a written agreement with Red Cross, can use their facilities as American Red Cross Shelters. **NOTE:** *UMCOR advises caution against churches doing this unless they have developed a written agreement with the American Red Cross that*

*specifies that the Red Cross and its insurance will cover provider liability and the cost of repair for any damages incurred while the church is a Red Cross shelter.*

2. **Relief Phase:** This phase is characterized by the need for cleanup, making homes safe, secure, and sanitary, and securing homeowners belongings. Short-term solutions are put into place to help survivors re-establish their lives until longer-term recovery strategies are available. The local community always leads this phase which integrates federal, state, and local governmental agencies, plus the many organizations who are members of Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD).
  - a. If the disaster is large, the governor may issue a State Disaster Declaration; the governor may request and receive a partial or full Presidential Declaration of Disaster and activate the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to coordinate the application and damage assessment process for those who register within 90 days following the date of declaration. Partial declarations are usually made to enable Public Assistance, for the use of federal money to repair infrastructure: roads, bridges, water systems, etc. Some FEMA declarations may include Individual Assistance which provides aid to families and individuals, usually in the form of low-interest disaster loans to homeowners, rental assistance, limited financial grants to certain eligible persons, disaster unemployment compensation, agriculture crop and livestock assistance, and other assistance. ***Most disasters within the Great Plains Conference do not warrant federal intervention and do not receive a State or Presidential Declaration. Therefore, individuals and families do not receive FEMA funding.***
  - b. Survivors begin to return to their homes to determine the extent of their losses and the damage to their property and begin to plan for their long-term recovery.
  - c. Disaster survivors begin seeking longer term shelter and begin applying for assistance through insurance companies and if available from FEMA, SBA, and other charitable volunteer organizations active in disasters.
  - d. Trained volunteer Early (Disaster) Response Teams are dispatched to help with debris clean-up, protecting roofs, windows, doors with tarps, providing water, clean-up kits, tools, and other supporting roles.
  - e. Ecumenical efforts that enable recovery and reconstruction for the long term are organized. As a member of VOAD (Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster), United Methodists volunteer at the assistance centers to meet with survivors, do early assessment intake, and begin coordinating volunteers to help meet needs.
3. **Recovery Phase:** The Long-Term Recovery stage is a time when permanent repairs and rebuilding take place. Most of the long-term recovery work is done by community-based social service recovery groups. United Methodists remain active in the long-term recovery, bringing our resources of volunteers, financial aid, materials, and expertise to assist in the recovery. The lead in this stage is the local community, the local people and church, aided by others when the local community cannot recover on its own.
  - a. As survivors begin to find things that cannot be repaired or replaced, they begin the process of adjusting and dealing with grief from permanent losses and changes. At this stage, deep emotional and spiritual scars begin to appear that

often manifest as depression and loss of energy. Additional emotional and spiritual support is needed for them to work through anger, isolation, loneliness and much loss.

- b. In Level 2 and higher disasters, United Methodists stay active for the long haul because rarely is recovery work completed within a year.
- c. Some disaster survivors recover without complications, having sufficient insurance and the support of finances, family, and community, however, about 50% - 75% of households in a community, there is a substantial struggle, even if they received a full FEMA “maximum grant”. This group of individuals are those with genuine needs that can only be resolved by agencies specializing in latter phases of disaster response. People who typically fall into this category of “at risk” include:
  - i. Elderly, children, and youth.
  - ii. Middle-class people who have resources but have never had to ask for help before.
  - iii. Minorities in predominately majority non-inclusive communities.
  - iv. Those below the poverty level.
  - v. Single parent households.
  - vi. Those who had relatives lose their lives in the disaster.
  - vii. People who have poor coping skills and those without adequate support systems.
  - viii. Non-English-speaking residents.
  - ix. Secondary victims whose workplaces do not reopen after the disaster and become jobless; community leaders, government employees, and disaster response workers who become over-stressed from trying to restore their communities including bankers, public works employees, and utility workers among many others.
- d. Catastrophic Disaster Recovery: Staff for leadership positions along with Information and Referral workers will be necessary. Numerous short-term volunteers will be required.

### ***UMCOR’S Role in UMC Disaster Response***

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), a unit of Global Ministries, is a humanitarian organization that helps alleviate human suffering, one of the two main goals of Global Ministries. UMCOR’s work is carried out by providing relief and assistance in response to natural and human-made disasters and supporting programs in the areas of migration, health, food security and environmental sustainability.

As The United Methodist Church’s global partner in all phases of disaster response, UMCOR supports goals and amplifies the connection’s reach through multidimensional support that includes the mobilization of personnel, material resources and funding.

UMCOR walks with Annual Conferences and Episcopal Areas globally, coordinating efforts to deliver aid, providing disaster response training and support casework and long-term recovery initiatives. In fact, UMCOR is often the last to leave a community. UMCOR operates on the principle that all donations for disaster relief go directly to those in need and are not used to cover administrative costs.

Every disaster is local, and UMCOR support can take a variety of forms, depending on the phase of the disaster. UMCOR supports UMC conferences and other partners in assuming a role in disaster response that is based on need, strength, interest, and capacity. This enables a UMC disaster response that is contextually specific, culturally appropriate and community centered.

### **UMCOR's Role in Various Phases of a Disaster:**

#### ***Preparedness:***

- Early response support: training, credentialing and deployment coordination for disaster volunteers.
- Cabinet training: education for decision-makers on UMCOR's incident coordination system. Identify and support areas for development; facilitate planning.
- Grant support for preparedness efforts.
- Continuity of operations planning.

#### ***Immediate Response:***

- Coordination support for a global network of over 8000 early responders.
- Onsite technical assistance as requested, depending on capacity and scale required.
- Solidarity grants: up to \$10,000 for immediate response needs.
- Relief grants: larger – scale support to address humanitarian concerns including food, water, sanitation and hygiene, as well as essential nonfood items and psychosocial support.
- Relief supply network: material and equipment support for disaster response in the U.S., including hygiene and cleaning kits.
- Communications support: coordination of messaging and raising awareness of disaster impact.

#### ***Recovery:***

- Training, including disaster case management and long-term recovery orientations to benefit survivors and raise community standards.
- Grant funding for church participation in long-term recovery at various levels, including program design and coaching.
- Coordination with relevant organizations engaged in recovery.
- Onsite technical assistance, as requested.

#### ***Mitigation/Disaster Risk Reduction:***

- Planning: technical assistance for disaster response planning remotely or in person.

- Facilitation of participatory approaches to identifying risks, hazards, assets, and mitigation strategies.
- Linkage and participation in national, state and regional disaster response forums to improve standards and enhance coordination.
- Support of the church's role in disaster response.
- Grant funding for disaster mitigation efforts.

***Annual Conference/Episcopal Area's Disaster Response Role with UMCOR:***

- Identify local disaster response priority areas and the role of the church.
- Facilitate disaster planning process and share the Disaster Response Plan.
- Designate and empower local disaster response leaders to coordinate with UMCOR, UMC counterparts and other stakeholders.
- Socialize the importance of disaster preparedness and response by hosting training, sharing information and undertaking initiatives.
- Provide UMCOR recommendations regarding the allocation of resources for disaster response staffing and programming, as feasible. While recognizing the budgetary challenges for conferences, paid staff can accomplish more in disaster response, and are taken more seriously in state VOADs, national emergency management forums and other coordination spaces.
- Coordinate disaster response programming with UMCOR disaster response for support in planning, training and technical assistance.

*While these activities represent UMCOR disaster response support in many cases, this list is not exhaustive. UMCOR consistently provides technical support, on-demand training, interdisciplinary programming and linkages to other Global Ministries' units and is always looking for new ways to support the church in alleviating human suffering and disaster response.*

~ Roland Fernandes, General Security, Global Ministries, United Methodist Committee on Relief and Higher Education and Ministry, January 2025

## Section 2: Disaster Response Plan Policy and Procedures

### *Objectives:*

These objectives are the focus of the Great Plains Conference in response to disasters within the Great Plains geographical areas:

- Establish a network and process through and within the bounds of the Conference that will enable an organized plan to respond to human suffering caused by disasters.
- Encourage and train local churches and clergy in preparing for disasters in the event their church and community are impacted by a disaster. Provide clergy and local churches with tools to develop their church disaster preparedness plans.
- Support the efforts and involvement of the local church by making the Conference resources and those of the General church available when needed and requested.
- Address the spiritual, emotional, physical, and financial needs that result from a disaster including the organizational, and facility needs of volunteers. Make Christ's love visible and help all disaster survivors experience God's grace and mercy through the response efforts of this ministry.
- Partner with UMCOR, FEMA, State and County Emergency Management to provide pertinent information related to disasters and assess immediate needs at the site of the disaster(s).
- Collaborate and work with ecumenical agencies, other denominational agencies, governmental and non-governmental relief agencies in responding to disasters.
- Identify specific locations where local church property and church-related properties have been impacted by a disaster and suffered damage.
- Assist in the dispensation of emergency aid and contributions, which have been contributed by UMCOR, local churches, and individuals, to survivors of disasters regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, gender, age, or sexual orientation.

### *Policy*

General:

- 1) The conference disaster response within the bounds of the annual conference geographical area will be activated when a local community is unable to handle the response, and the conference is *invited* into the community by the Local Emergency Manager or State Departments of Emergency Management.
- 2) The Bishop of the Great Plains Conference is the only individual who can initiate a request for UMCOR assistance within the bounds of the conference geographical area.
- 3) The services of this ministry will be multifaceted to include the compassionate and caring ministry of Christ's church with theological, spiritual, physical, mental health, advocacy, social services, home repair, rebuilding, and volunteer management dimensions.
- 4) UMCOR training, funding, and case management policies and practices will be followed.
- 5) Local churches who offer their facilities to be used as an American Red Cross (ARC) shelter must work with their Board of Trustees to obtain a written agreement with ARC to

become a certified shelter prior to a disaster. The written agreement must include a statement that the ARC and its insurance will cover the provider's liability and the cost of repair for any damages incurred. The agreement protects the local church and its officers from liability for everything that happens in the shelter.

- 6) The Disaster Response Team members, all Early Response Team (ERT) members, all Long-Term Recovery United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) team members, and all intake and disaster case managers must be certified through Safe Gatherings prior to representing the conference at any disaster site during the Relief Phase.
- 7) The Conference Disaster Response Team shall write the necessary policies and procedures for financial accounting of Disaster Funds and expenses to be approved by the Annual Conference or its designees.
- 8) The Conference Disaster Response Team shall develop, and update policies and procedures related to disaster response and obtain approval of those from the Annual Conference or its designees.

### **Program Services**

- 1) Disaster response program services will respect the recovery goals of the impacted community and when possible, will function as a collaborative partnership with other organizations within that community to extend the help to more people.
- 2) Disaster response aid will be offered to disaster survivors of any race, religion, gender, or political persuasion within those boundaries.
- 3) Disaster survivors with special needs will be given the highest priority for assistance: elderly, children, persons with disabilities, low-income households, no insurance, low insurance, and non-English speaking households.

### **Confidentiality**

- 1) The information of all persons receiving disaster response aid through the conference disaster response ministry will be kept confidential and protected always consistent with a signed Release of Confidential Information agreement.
- 2) Donor information will remain confidential unless the donor provides a written consent of release.

### **Publicity**

- 1) All conference disaster response materials and logos should be identified as "Great Plains Conference – United Methodist in Disaster Response, an UMCOR partner.

### **Training**

- 1) The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, Conference Disaster Team members and each Early Response Team (ERT) member will complete UMCOR's Basic ERT Training every three (3) years; they will be provided with emergency access badges upon completion of this training.
- 2) It is recommended that the Bishop, Cabinet, and conference property manager be provided with basic disaster response training at least once every four years or upon their

request and will be provided with emergency access badges upon completion of the training.

### **Donations**

- 1) All disaster response donations will be managed transparently to keep donors in the loop with financial information and program results. Assurance must be given to all donors that their contributions will be used in a manner consistent with United Methodist disaster response guidelines and in an appropriate way for disaster-related needs throughout the disaster area regardless of a person's race, creed, national origin, gender, age, religious affiliation, or sexual orientation, but consideration to marginalized persons will be a priority.
- 2) Funds raised within the conference belong to the conference and may be used for the disaster in any manner the conference disaster response ministry determines, subject to conference and *Disciplinary* rules.
- 3) All money sent to the Great Plains Conference Treasure designed for a disaster shall be held in the Disaster Response Fund account.
- 4) Disaster Response Funds are spent for the disaster's relief and/or recovery and is approved by the Conference Disaster Response Team.
- 5) UMCOR grants awarded are provided with the understanding that conference money will be used before UMCOR money is expended. It is also assumed that UMCOR funds are needed only if projected recovery costs will exceed funds available within the affected conference, including any money raised through special conference appeals for the disaster. UMCOR funds are to be used in addition to conference resources, not in place of them.
- 6) Grant requests to UMCOR above the initial \$10,000 Solidarity Grant, must comply with UMCOR grant requirements, documentation, and budgets. Any UMCOR money not spent is to be returned to UMCOR per the grant requirements.

### **Expenditures**

- 1) All requests for expenditures from the Disaster Response Fund shall be submitted first to the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator who will vet each request and speak with the applicant concerning their need(s). The application will then be sent to the Conference Disaster Team Chair who will review and then forward to the members of the Conference Disaster Team for discussion and a vote. All required documentation is then submitted to the Conference Treasures office by the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator for payment to a vendor. If payment is made to an individual, receipts for payment for disaster related items are to be submitted within 90 days of receiving the check or refund the donation. Requests may be submitted by a Regional Disaster Leader, Disaster Incident Coordinator, Conference representative to a Long-Term Recovery Group, a Local Church Clergy, District Superintendent, Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, or the Emergency Manager.
- 2) The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator may approve requests of up to \$3,000. All requests that exceed \$3,000 must be approved by a vote of the Conference Disaster

Response Team in either a conference call meeting or by email vote as appropriate. Regional Disaster Leaders may approve up to \$1,000. A higher request from the Regional Disaster Leader will need to be approved by the Conference Disaster Team via a conference call or email vote.

- 3) The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator shall mail, email, or submit in writing the expense requests to the Conference Treasurer for payment. Documentation shall include the application for assistance, estimates from businesses or contractors or from a Long-Term Recovery Group, and a copy of the Disaster Case Managers case work with full documentation of need.
- 4) The expense requests shall include the amount requested, amount approved, the name and address of the recipient of the check (business with a W-9 included), and what the request seeks to accomplish. Normally all recipients will be a United Methodist Church, a Long-Term Recovery Group, an inter-faith organization or a vendor. Care is taken to not provide a check to an individual, and if is the case, the individual has 90 days to submit all receipts from disaster related purchases or refund the donation.
- 5) UMCOR disaster response grant funds shall be handled as follows:
  - a. Cannot be spent repairing vacation homes or second homes.
  - b. Cannot be spent to repair conference owned church property unless approved by the Connecting Council and UMCOR.
  - c. Cannot be spent to repair business owned property.
  - d. May be used to replace or repair personal property owned in conjunction with a business such as farmhouses.
  - e. Funds cannot be used to repair rental property.
  - f. Cannot be spent in a way that would duplicate federal, or state benefits or benefits received from other disaster response organizations.
  - g. When UMCOR funds are used, an After-Action Report shall be completed and submitted following each disaster by the Conference Disaster Response Team to the Connecting Council and to UMCOR.
- 6) The Great Plains Disaster Fund shall be handled as follows:
  - a. The disaster response fund is for the relief of people who have suffered from a disaster(s) within the Great Plains Conference and are not to be used for ongoing socio-economic concerns.
  - b. Financial assistance will be considered upon submission of a Great Plains Disaster Fund Financial Assistance Request Form submitted by a United Methodist Clergy, the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, a Regional Disaster Leader, a District Superintendent, a person appointed to represent the Great Plains Conference Disaster Response Team on a Long-Term Recovery Group, or an Emergency Manager.
  - c. The amount of assistance will be dependent upon the unmet needs expressed, the number of requests and the availability of funds.
  - d. Grants up to \$5,000 may be made to local United Methodist Churches where major disasters occur. The church can use these funds to provide financial assistance for disaster-related costs (except for church property) and must provide

- documentation of the expenditure of those funds to the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator monthly to prevent duplication of benefits.
- e. Disaster funds may be used to reimburse owners of equipment that respond to requests for clean-up and recovery by the Great Plains Disaster Response Coordinator or the Conference Disaster Response Team. Reimbursement will be limited to the actual expenses incurred in transporting and operating the equipment.

### **Disaster Case Management**

1. Homeowners approved for conference disaster response assistance help must sign a “Homeowner Release of Confidential Information” form and a “Homeowner Release of Liability and Access to Property” form prior to volunteers doing any work on the house or property during the recovery phase.
2. All signed disaster response forms and case management records will be retained and stored according to Conference, FEMA, and UMCOR policies.

### **Volunteers**

1. All adult volunteers serving in disaster response through the conference ministry must provide their own health insurance, plus sign and have witnessed a United Methodist Volunteer in Mission Adult Liability Release Form before being assigned to a work project.
2. Youth volunteers serving in disaster response during the relief phase must be at least in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade and during the recovery phase must be at least 16 years old, have health insurance coverage, and sign a United Methodist Volunteer in Mission Youth Liability Release Form with signature approval of their parent or legal guardian witnessed. Youth volunteers must be accompanied and supervised by their United Methodist Volunteer in Mission Youth Group Leader who has also signed a United Methodist Volunteer in Mission Youth Group Leader (UMVIM YGL) Liability Release Form. There must be at least one UMVIM YGL for every five youth volunteers serving through the disaster response ministry. During the relief or recovery phase, no youth is allowed to use power tools of any kind.
3. In the event that the local incident Commander, Emergency Manager, or Long-Term Recovery Group sets a minimum age for volunteers above what is specified by the Great Plains Conference Policy, we will comply with their minimum age requirements.
4. All United Methodist Volunteers in Mission and any volunteer serving with Great Plains Disaster Response must sign and agree to follow the Great Plains Conference United Methodist Volunteer in Mission Covenant for Success.
5. All volunteers must have completed Safe Gatherings Training.
6. All volunteers are to wear the required Great Plains United Methodist Disaster Response Shirt (lime green) and have their badges visible at all times while volunteering.

## *Roles and Responsibilities*

### **Conference Disaster Response Team**

The Conference Disaster Response Team develops and recommends policies and procedures related to disaster response for approval by the Annual Conference and recruits and trains volunteers from around the conference to become volunteers in the disaster response ministry.

The team does not run the local disaster recovery operations; however, team members are not restricted from volunteering in a disaster response area.

Although the team may not as a whole perform disaster relief activities, some of its members are likely to be involved on-site following a disaster.

### **Conference Disaster Response Team Members**

The Conference Disaster Response Team relates directly to the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator. The Chairperson is elected by the Annual Conference while the vice-chairperson and secretary are elected by the conference disaster response team. Officers are to be elected each quadrennium. All members of the Conference Disaster Response Team must be an active, credentialed Early Response Team volunteer. Membership will consist of 12 voting members including:

- At least eight (8) Regional Disaster Leaders representing the ten regions.
- Four (4) at-large members.
- One (1) project manager

### **Conference Disaster Response Team Ex-Officio Members**

The following shall be ex-officio members with voice, yet no vote:

- The Bishop, or his or her representative.
- Conference Disaster Response Coordinator.
- Conference Treasurer.
- Conference Disaster Response Coordinator's Supervisor
- ERT Team Leaders

### **Conference Disaster Response Team Clergy Membership**

If possible, find laity to represent the regions on the Conference Disaster Response Team because although providing valuable leadership to the team, clergy are often transferred just before they are needed to serve in an important role during a disaster. Also, it can be very difficult for local church clergy to maintain their ministerial duties and devote the time necessary during relief and recovery. In this case, the Conference Disaster Response Team recommends relieving a clergy of their ministerial duties in the local church for at least one month and appointing supply clergy for that one month. In the event there are two clergy at one church, the clergy can take turns serving the local congregation while the other is taking leadership in the relief and recovery of the disaster. The cabinet should interpret this necessity to the congregation.

### **Conference Disaster Response Coordinator**

The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (CDRC) role is a full-time paid staff position within the conference which provides support and oversight to the response of the Great Plains Annual Conference in times of disaster and relates to denominational (UMCOR) and secular disaster response organizations (VOAD, FEMA, State and Local Emergency Management Agencies). The CDRC arranges and coordinates ongoing disaster response trainings and assures that administrative procedures are followed. The individual in this role must complete training classes at least once per quadrennium at UMCOR's Training Academy (when held) or Southcentral Jurisdiction Disaster Response Academy (when held). A job description is available from the Conference Office.

### **Regional Disaster Leader**

Our Regional Leaders interpret the work of the Conference Disaster Response Team to local pastors and local congregations and provide an initial on-site assessment with the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator as soon as possible after a disaster strikes in a district within their region. Regional Leaders may also be called upon to attend local community disaster meetings that include representatives from local emergency management and other disaster response organizations. The Regional Leader may be called upon to lead or help lead the relief work in a disaster area. Regional Leaders represent every Great Plains District. They are active, credentialed Early Response Team individuals who have a deep passion for our ministry of compassion and care.

## **Section 3: Procedures and Practices**

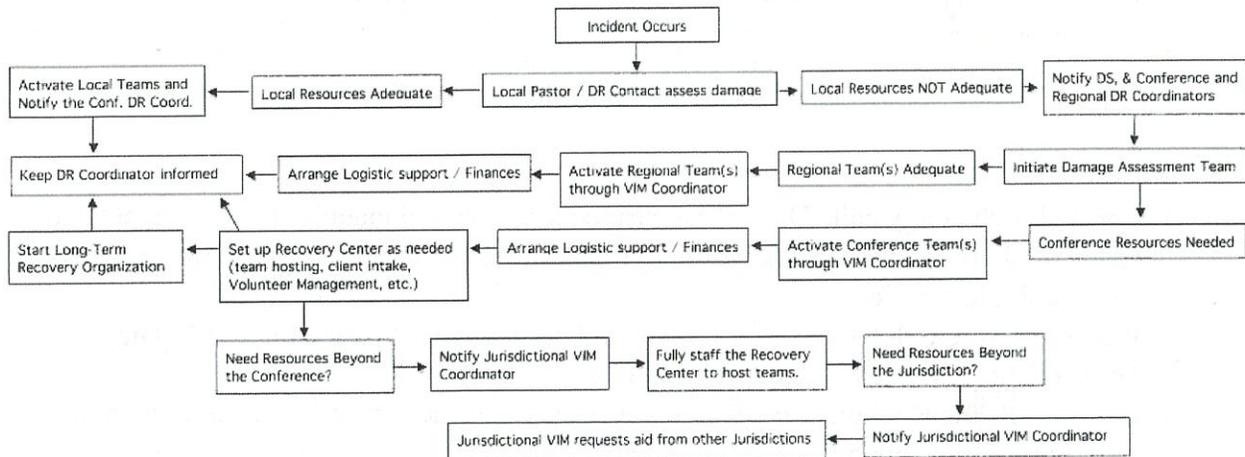
### ***Activating the Conference Disaster Response System***

1. Long before a disaster happens, all local churches in the Great Plains Conference need to develop their own disaster preparedness plan and send members of their congregation to the Conference Disaster Response Classes. Classes are taught by UMCOR trained trainers from within our conference boundaries.
2. When a disaster happens, the church clergy should immediately contact the District Superintendent and the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator.
3. When alerted to a disaster, the Regional Disaster Leader will also immediately contact the District Superintendent and the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator to report the disaster and any information they currently know about the situation.
4. *This redundant contact assignment is to ensure that the Conference leadership is informed.* If any of the above individuals cannot be reached, please contact the Conference Office at 785.272.9111. If it is after hours, please leave a message for the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator.
5. The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and/or the Regional Disaster Leader shall make arrangements to visit the disaster site as soon as possible to make an initial assessment of the disaster area and to meet with the local clergy.

6. The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and/or the Regional Disaster Leader will make initial contact with the Incident Command Post, local authorities, Emergency Management, as to what is needed and then, if possible, make a quick visual assessment of the damaged area.
7. Based on the reported magnitude of the disaster, the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator will determine, upon consultation with the Incident Commander and/or the Emergency Manager, whether to activate a Disaster Assessment Team. Within hours of the disaster, the Emergency Management has already done an assessment. The State Department of Emergency Management will have also done a preliminary damage assessment. In a large disaster, FEMA will have also done their assessment.
8. If the disaster is large enough, the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator will request the Bishop and Communications Department to begin preparations for a conference appeal for funds for the Great Plains Disaster Response Fund. The Bishop may also request a \$10,000 emergency grant from UMCOR if the disaster will exceed the local community and conference's ability to meet the financial needs of the response and recovery.
9. If the disaster is large enough, a Conference Disaster Response base of operations will be set up with phone access as close to the disaster as possible. Phones will be staffed by volunteers at all times to accept damage assessments and volunteer help requests.
10. If damage has been sustained within the bounds of the Great Plains Conference and volunteers are requested, the CDRC and/or the Regional Disaster Leader will discuss:
  - a. The number and skills of volunteers needed.
  - b. The type and quantity of equipment needed.
  - c. The specific location, dates, times, and contact person for volunteers to report to
  - d. Any damage to United Methodist property i.e. churches, parsonages, etc.
11. The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and Local Church Clergy will:
  - a. Contact the communications department to provide regular updates to be emailed out to the annual conference.
  - b. Contact the communications department to request an appeal for volunteers, equipment and/or materials (water, gloves, cleaning kits, etc.) that are needed to address the disaster work.
12. In the event that volunteers are needed, the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator will email a deployment call-out to all active, credentialed Early Response Team individuals.
13. In the event of a large-scale disaster when assistance is needed from other conferences, or jurisdictions, the Early Response Team Leader and the Base Camp Leader will arrange for work locations and housing for those teams. Information gathered: contact information, the number of people on their team, the days and times of their service, equipment and supplies they will be bringing, and verification of lodging if they have arranged on their own.
14. The Regional Disaster Leader will keep the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator informed of the dates and groups, number of people, and equipment that will be responding.

15. Great Plains Disaster Response efforts will be represented and in attendance at the local disaster meetings:
  - a. If the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator is not present at the disaster scene, the Regional Disaster Leader will attend the local disaster meetings and call the CDRC at least daily to keep them informed of the progress being made.
  - b. If the Regional Disaster Leader is also unable to be present in the community and/or at the meetings, the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, in consultation with the Regional Disaster Leader, will appoint another person to serve in this capacity.

Great Plains Conference UMC Disaster Response Activation Flowchart



NOTES:

1. Initially teams should be Early Response Teams and may include members trained in Spiritual & Emotional Care and/or Information and Referral.
2. Later teams may consist of members with Basic Disaster Response training, while teams during the rebuilding phase should include members with construction skills.
3. When a Recovery Center is established, the following are necessary: Team Housing, Facilities for cooking/eating, Showers, Volunteer Management, space for Survivor Intake. The following are desirable if needed: Construction management, Job Assessor / Estimator, Cooks, Secretarial support, Phone bank operators, Custodial support.
4. All Functions of the ICS must be staffed. This can be accomplished by one or two persons in a small disaster, or more as needed in a large disaster.
5. ALWAYS work with the local Emergency Manager and any other VOAD agencies who are also responding.
6. REMEMBER, The Community owns the disaster—We are there to help, not to take over. |

### Bishop’s Appeal to Conference Members

It is important for the Bishop to issue an appeal for funds as soon as possible after a disaster occurs. Any delay will cause members to assume the church is not involved in the response, and they will donate to other agencies. An appeal from the Bishop may be issued in three ways.

- 1) A letter emailed from the Bishop’s office to clergy and church leaders asking that an offering be taken within the next two Sundays following the disaster.

- 2) A video appeal may be filmed with the Bishop at the disaster site. The video appeal may be posted to the conference website, social media, and made available for download by congregations to show in worship when the offering is taken.
- 3) The Communications Department is encouraged to continue to post appeals throughout the relief and recovery phase of a disaster.



## Communications Flow Chart for Activation of the Conference Disaster Response Ministry

### *The Disaster Happens, What Next?*

- 1) Local church clergy calls District Superintendent to report magnitude of the event and status of church property. Asks for help if disaster is too large for the church and community to handle.
- 2) If help is requested, the District Superintendent immediately calls the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (CDRC).
- 3) CDRC calls the Regional Leader as soon as aware of the disaster to request an on-site visit and verify availability (within 24 hrs.).
  - a. Regional Disaster Leader calls CDRC as soon as they are aware of disaster (redundancy ensures awareness).
- 4) Regional Disaster Leader may function as Local Incident Coordinator for CDRC. CDRC and Regional Disaster Leader visits site to make a preliminary assessment.
- 5) If requested by the local Emergency Manager, the CDRC will activate a Damage Assessment Team.
- 6) CDRC will get permission from the Emergency Manager to do a personal drive through of the disaster area. Based on those observations, the CDRC determines if Early Response Team Volunteers are needed. If so, a deployment call-out email will be sent.
- 7) CDRC updates Bishop and Communications Department of current situation. If an appeal is needed, the CDRC will request that of the Bishop. Communications will help with getting the request out for volunteers.
- 8) CDRC welcomes/coordinates the work of the ERTS, recruits and train spontaneous volunteers.
- 9) In the event of a large disaster within the conference, the Regional Disaster Leader will identify volunteer needs with local authorities and work with the CDRC to fill those requests.

### **Disaster Damage Assessment Team**

The Conference Damage Assessment Team may be requested by the local Emergency Management for surveying the scope of the damage and managing an appropriate response in the early days after a disaster event. That group reports to the CDRC, who reports to the local Emergency Management. A decision is then made on whether to activate Early Response Team individuals. *All management and deployment decisions for volunteers (including Early Response Teams) are under the direction of the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, or designee.*

While the Damage Assessment Team is surveying the scope of the disaster, the following should also be surveying the area:

- District Superintendent
- Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
- Regional Disaster Leader
- Local Church Clergy or Neighboring Clergy
- District Disaster Leader (if one)
- Local Church Disaster Leader (if one)

### **Early Response Teams (ERT) in the Relief Phase**

Early Response Teams (ERTS) are those United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) individuals and teams who have been trained in UMCOR's Basic ERT Disaster Response protocols and hands-on experiences. ERTS speed the immediate response to survivors and have no management or administrative responsibility for the overall disaster response. They give visibility of our United Methodist presence, reassuring survivors that the church cares enough to immediately respond to their needs.

### **Deploying Early Response Teams (ERTS)**

- 1) ERTS will be composed of members who have been UMCOR trained, credentialed, and Safe Gatherings certified and who are recognized by the Conference Disaster Response Ministry and South-Central Jurisdiction UMVIM. All ERTS must have completed and passed all trainings and back ground checks, including UMCOR's Sterling Volunteer Check.
- 2) ERTS will be invited and deployed by the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator. In the event of a large disaster event, the CDRC will request ERTS from other conferences and/or the jurisdiction. This official request will come through UMCOR to other conference CDRC's.
- 3) ERTS will be provided with information about who, when, and where to report to at the disaster site in order to receive their work assignments.
- 4) ERTS will work under the direction and control of the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and/or the Regional Disaster Leader.

- 5) ERTS must be self-sufficient, meaning they must provide their own food, water, housing (churches or tents, etc.), fuel, transportation and tools. The CDRC and/or Regional Disaster Leader will inform the ERTS if housing, food, water, etc. is being provided for them by a Local Church or other organization.
- 6) The Deployment Protocol is as follows:
  - a. First: Conference ERTS
  - b. Second: Jurisdictional ERTS
  - c. Third: Entire denominational ERTS beyond the jurisdiction if needed

### **Primary Duties of Early Response Teams in the Relief Phase**

Early Response Teams are assigned by the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator to perform the following activities at their designated work locations:

- Provide immediate assistance usually to those who are older, disabled, or persons without a support system to help with the hard work of clean-up.
- Remove debris.
- Provide tarping to roofs, windows and/or doors to reduce future damage, make the building safe, secure, and to reduce health hazards to the survivors.
- Muck out a home after a flood.
- Observe survivors' needs and report these to the conference staff and the Local Incident Coordinator.
- Be part of a caring ministry of listeners who will help the survivors to begin to heal.

*ERTS are not to perform any rebuilding or repairs that may jeopardize a survivor's eligibility for financial assistance from insurance and/or government agencies.*

### **Things Early Response Teams (ERTS) Do Not Do in the Relief Phase**

- 1) ERTS do not make repairs or begin rebuilding. To do so before insurance and government assessments are done and permission to proceed is given may reduce or eliminate any assistance from those sources. This can become a liability issue for team members, churches, districts, and the conference if teams are thought to hinder a person's access to benefits.
- 2) Rebuilding and repairs will be done by UMVIM Teams and others that will come in during the recovery phase.
- 3) ERTS do not come into a disaster area without an invitation from the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and only after an official invitation has been received from the local Emergency Manager.
- 4) Out-of-town conference teams do not come in until they have received an official invitation from the CDRC through UMCOR. All teams report to the CDRC, or designee for assignment.
- 5) ERTS do not come in unless they are trained, certified, credentialed, and recognized by the Conference Disaster Response Ministry and the South-Central Jurisdiction.
- 6) ERTS do not make promises of any kind to a survivor. In the early days of response, no one can know how things will turn out and whether anyone from our group or any group

will be able to do anything further. Survivors are desperate, and often a “maybe” or “we’ll check” can sound like a yes. Be careful with what words you use with survivors.

### **Early Response Team Size**

The tasks to be performed will determine the size of the team(s); however, the recommended team size is from 7 to 14 people. Local churches are encouraged to recruit and train at least three times more people than will be deployed at a given time. This planning gives a better chance of being able to staff a full team when the need arises. It also offers the possibility of offering two or three teams at one time.

### **Early Response Team Members Roles**

- 1) Team Leader
  - a. In charge of the Early Response Team
  - b. Leader has an overall understanding of the role of ERTS.
  - c. Relates directly to the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator or site leader.
- 2) Assistant Team Leader
  - a. Serves as a back-up to the team leader when he/she leaves the work site or is unavailable.
- 3) Logistics Manager
  - a. Helps the team find supplies and transportation.
  - b. Responsible for site safety, checking out the site before the team walks into an area and ensuring there is no danger to the team where they are to work.
  - c. Responsible for making sure the team has the equipment and ability to do the assigned job.
- 4) Base Camp Manager
  - a. Responsible for food, cooking, water and preparing a place to sleep if it is necessary for the team to spend the night.
  - b. Shops for food, creates a schedule of who cooks, cleans, etc. so that the load is shared.
  - c. Works alongside the team during the day
- 5) Equipment Manager
  - a. Responsible for keeping any equipment owned by the conference in good working order.
  - b. Accompanies the team to the disaster site.
- 6) Safety Officer
  - a. Designated to pay attention to the individual team members’ safety.
  - b. Checks that proper personal protective equipment is being used and team members are performing at optimal efficiency.
- 7) Listener/Team Recorder
  - a. Designated to be the listener to the survivors, to be the caring presence, listen to their needs and feelings.

- b. This person *does not* provide pastoral care or counseling, but should listen to the survivors and get their story; refers survivors' needs to members of the Conference Disaster Response Team
- c. Take notes when appropriate, keeps all team forms and fills in necessary forms for community response. Forms to be occurred: Volunteer Release of Liability Form, Homeowner Release of Liability Form for Access to Property, and Homeowner Release of Liability Form for Work on their Home.

## **Managing Funding and In-Kind Donations**

### **Donated Funds**

Larger disasters generate significant amounts of donated money from within and outside the conference, most of it arriving during the first one or two months following the disaster event. The conference designated account is 975/420101 for receiving all donations.

The Conference Disaster Response Team will allocate these funds for disaster response needs in accordance with the Disaster Fund Guidelines.

### **Great Plains Conference Disaster Response Fund**

The Great Plains Conference Disaster Fund was established to provide a method for collecting funds to assist disaster survivors within the bounds of the Great Plains Annual Conference. Funds may be given to another Annual Conference after a large disaster as a sign of our support. These funds are administered by the Conference Disaster Response Team and the accounting is done by the Conference Treasurer's Office. Funds are distributed in accordance with the Great Plains Disaster Fund Guidelines. Requests may be made by local clergy on behalf of individuals in their communities, Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, Regional Disaster Leader, person appointed to a Long-Term Recovery Group, Disaster Case Manager, or a Local Emergency Manager. The Bishop issues appeals for funds whenever they are needed to replenish the funds available for use during a disaster.

### **Disbursement of Funds**

Paper trails and good accounting are essential for all transactions but quickly evolving disaster operations require considerable flexibility in disbursing money. While conference procedures must be followed, we must be able to dispense funds rapidly. The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, upon request, shall be granted an advance from the Great Plains Disaster Response Fund in accordance with the current Disaster Fund Guidelines.

Funds from the Government and other agencies should be used before church funds are used. Church funds are needed most during the long-term recovery, long after contributions have dwindled or stopped completely. However, with the lagging of insurance and FEMA funding, it is imperative that survivors begin to see some financial relief early in the disaster process. Survivors can only apply for assistance once during a disaster year.

It is best to wait until disaster case management is in place prior to distributing any funds, if possible.

### **Repair of Damaged Church Property**

Each conference may generate its own special appeal for the repair of church property following a disaster.

Every church within the Great Plains should have adequate insurance, including flood coverage (which is a separate policy). Funds from the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) are generally not available to repair church properties. The Book of Discipline states: “UMCOR will review proposals for funding to repair places of worship or church property damaged by disasters in consultation with conference disaster response coordinators, bishops, and district superintendents in The United Methodist Church, or with persons in similar positions from other religious institutions, and will arrange an on-site visit to evaluate and initiate an ongoing consultative process when appropriate.” (1315d, 2020/2024 Book of Discipline)

### **Relief of Human Suffering**

Our compassionate and caring ministry often called “pastoral care,” is the reason we are involved in disaster response. Too often these days, pastoral care is so narrowly defined that it is thought to mean mental health counseling, or something that only clergy can do, or exclusively care for clergy.

The spiritual and emotional care of disaster survivors and caregivers is our multifaceted ministry with theological, physical, mental health, and social service components. This compassionate and caring ministry is to reach all survivors. We must remember the marginalized. Do not allow anyone to fall through the cracks and feel that within the midst of the turmoil that they do not matter.

The caregivers also are candidates for care. Caregivers have been guilty of wearing themselves out in the disaster ministry, to the detriment of themselves, their families and their careers. Each worker should be given time to debrief. Also, in large disasters the committee should provide pastoral care for the workers on site.

### **Management of Volunteers and Donated Goods**

Volunteers and In-Kind (non-cash) donations will begin to arrive shortly after a major disaster. It is important that the needs for both volunteers and donated items be well publicized through disaster updates, conference email, newsletters, social media, and other appropriate media outlets. The requests should include *specific information* on what materials are needed, as well as a statement that materials not listed should not be sent. Encourage donors to call and schedule delivery rather than just showing up to help maintain control of both the type of items being donated and the quantities received.

**Prior** to requesting any in-kind donations, a facility must be secured for storage and distribution of the materials. If in-kind donations will be accepted, the disaster Incident Coordinator should determine what donations are needed and what donations can and will be accepted. This determination should be based upon:

- what items are needed
- what storage facilities are available and where the facility(s) is located
- the availability of volunteers to manage the receiving, sorting, and distribution of the materials
- other factors relevant to that particular contextual disaster.

### **Volunteers**

Much harm has been and can be done by well-intentioned yet untrained volunteers. If repairs are made before insurance, county, state, and federal inspectors visit, the homeowner may be declared ineligible for financial compensation because the repairs go beyond the “safe, secure, and healthy” requirement. Not only is this a moral issue, yet also it puts the conference, its officers, and volunteers who did the work at risk of a lawsuit should the homeowner find that is the only way to get help with the additional costs to redo the work.

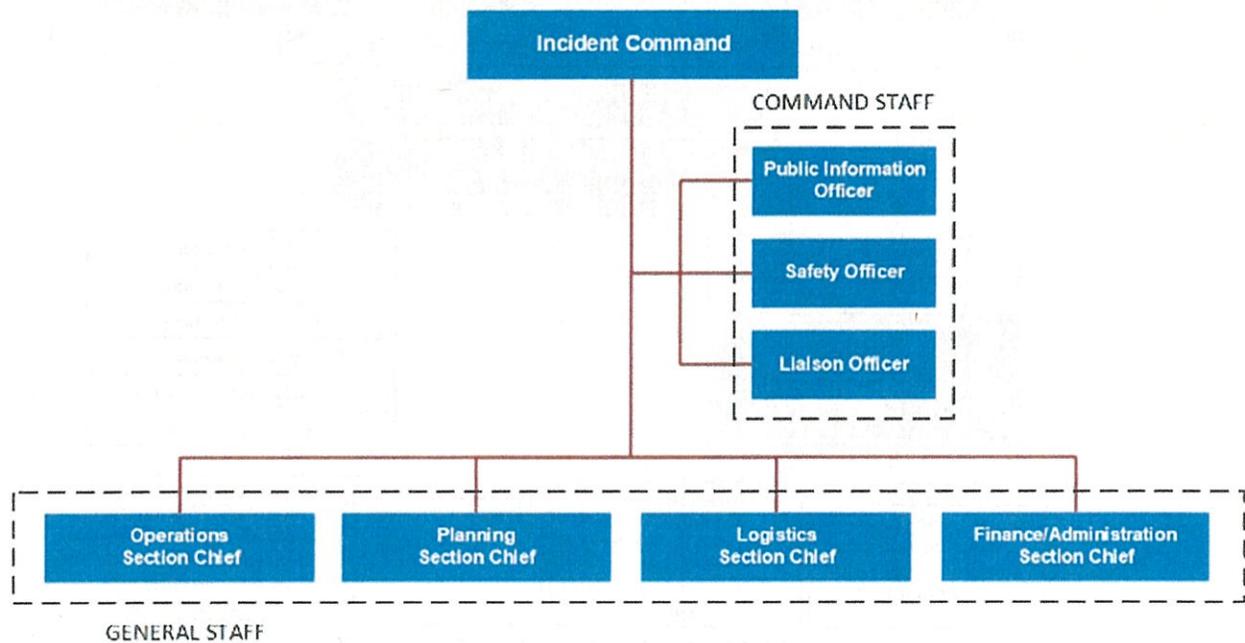
In a large to catastrophic disaster and before any volunteers are requested, the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator must find an operations center as close to the disaster site as possible and set up phone service with staffing to handle communications and perhaps also provide survivor intake and volunteer assignments.

The CDRC will work with local church officials to secure housing, meals and showers for all Great Plains volunteers as near to the disaster site as possible. If this cannot be done, all Great Plains volunteers will need to be self-sufficient with their housing and meals.

## *Relief Phase Incident Command System*

### **Working with State and Federal Emergency Management**

This section describes how the Great Plains Conference Disaster Response Ministry works within the governmental plan. The Great Plains Disaster Plan embraces UMCOR's recommendation to function within the framework of the government's National Response Plan Homeland Security Presidential Directive Five: The National Response Framework (NRF) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS). NIMS is an integrated organizational structure and procedures that can be expanded based on the complexity of a disaster, operating a single-site Incident Command System (ICS) as well as a multi-site Unified Command. The National Incident Command System is as follows:



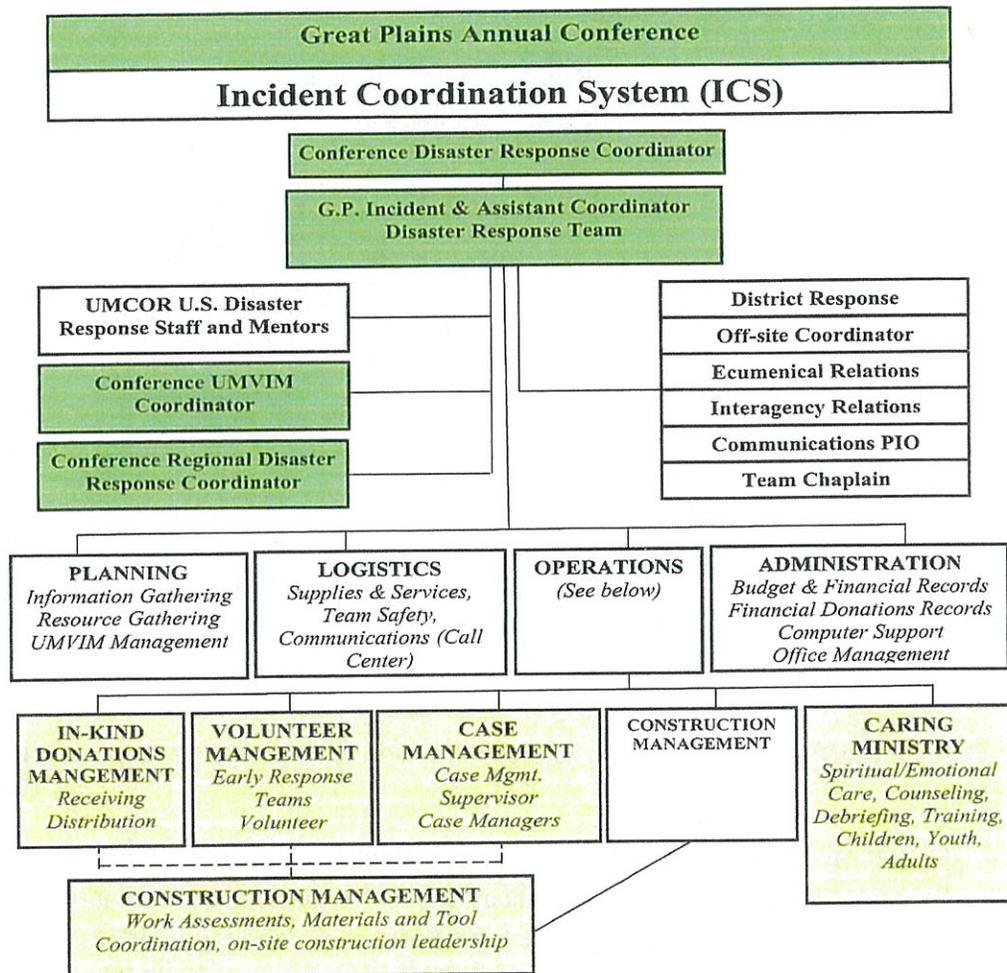
The General Staff assignments are under each section chief and their responsibilities are as follows:

- Operations: sets strategy and actions to accomplish Command objectives.
- Planning: coordinates and supports activities for planning, coordinates information across the response system, and supports Operations in processing incident information.
- Logistics: supports Command and Operations in the use of personnel, supplies, and equipment. Performs technical activities to maintain function of operational facilities and processes.
- Finance/Administration: supports Command and Operations with administrative issues as well as tracking and processing incident expenses, handles licensure requirements, regulatory compliance, and financial accounting.

All Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), which includes the Great Plains Disaster Response Ministry, operate within the ICS model when cooperating with other

emergency response agencies. The Great Plains Disaster Response Ministry is active in Kansas and Nebraska VOAD's. As a member of VOAD, our disaster response ministry must first and foremost demonstrate our willingness to work for and with others. We pledge to support and work within the regulations of existing communities developed relief plans of action and seek to not duplicate services in any one area where a disaster has happened.

**The Great Plains Conference Disaster Response Ministry Incident Command**



## **Under the Great Plains Disaster Response Incident Command System**

Functions/objectives may look like the following:

### ***Operations Coordination Role:***

Conference Disaster Response Team members functioning in this area are responsible for performing the operational tasks assigned to them by the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and/or the Chair of the Conference Disaster Response Team. These tasks are the reason we exist as a church response organization. Operations during the response include, yet are not limited to:

- Damage assessments
- Volunteer Reception Management
- Debris clean-up, tarping of roofs, windows, and doors, muck outs (Relief Phase) and Repairs and Rebuilds during the Recovery Phase
- Disaster Case Management
- In-kind donations
- Caring ministry of spiritual and emotional care
- Construction management

### ***Logistics Coordination Role:***

This function is responsible for locating, organizing, and providing facilities, materials, and services for the conference disaster response team and/or volunteers. Also included under this role is team safety and communications.

### ***Planning and Training Coordination Role:***

Responsibilities include, yet are not limited to the collection, evaluation, dissemination, and use of information about the life cycle of the disaster. The role also helps to look at realistic goal setting and helps plan the next steps.

A large part of this role could also be the orientation of teams as they arrive at the site, collection of daily tasks completed and the debriefing of teams nightly.

### ***Administration Coordination Role:***

In the event of a large and/or catastrophic event, this role is critical for the management of office personnel who will handle incoming phone calls, file management, copying services, and keeping any financial contributions that come in on-site. This role also coordinates the intake of any out-of-conference and jurisdictional teams that come in to volunteer, keeping track of and filing of volunteer, medical and all release of liability forms for each person.

The telephone team is critical. It is extremely important to have plenty of volunteers who can serve in this role. It is important to schedule phone staff hours to accommodate the various time zones from which offers of help might come.

Always provide the phone staff with accurate, up-to-date information that can be given to callers including what types of donations are or are not being accepted, how to make cash donations, and the type of volunteer help and equipment is needed.

## Long-Term Recovery

### Long-Term Recovery Groups

Long-Term Recovery Groups, made up of representatives from faith-based and community-based organizations are key in the recovery phase of a disaster. These organizations do most of the long-term recovery work. Very often it takes years for a community to recover following a devastating disaster. Long-Term Recovery groups are present and working to find finances and other resources needed to assist residents in repairing and/or rebuilding their homes.

Because the media and the headlines all but disappear in the recovery phase (along with the donations they generate), and survivor unmet needs are complex and increasing, cooperation and sharing of resources among aid groups are vital. The Long-Term Recovery Groups are crucial.

### Strengths The United Methodist Church Can Bring to Disaster Response

- United Methodists have proven their ability to deal effectively with disasters in the following ways:
  - **Presence:** There are United Methodist Churches in virtually every county. Any community without a UMC is close enough to another one so that our help can quickly be made available.
  - **Permanence:** United Methodists are here to stay. When all other agencies have left the disaster site, the Church will always be there. During a disaster our work may intensify by participating in the relief and recovery phases. The presence of the local church brings hope and healing to those impacted by a disaster.
  - **Structure:** As a connectional church, United Methodist have a tremendous advantage in the pooling and sharing of resources. A local church that is struggling with their own financial situation can still be a conduit for the greater resources of the Conference and the General Church. The advantage of the connection can keep the local church from being overwhelmed and assist with specialized services that would otherwise not be available.
  - **Interfaith Commitment:** A greater effectiveness and faith witness is possible through a cooperative and coordinated response rather than having denominations and faith communities working individually. As United Methodist, we are committed to working with all faith-based groups to bring hope and healing to all survivors.
  - **Local Sensitivity:** United Methodists are committed to the proposition that local community leaders know their community and its unique needs in a disaster. The religious community of any area is empowered to fashion a response which is

appropriate and sensitive. We help people and communities restore their own self-sufficiency as we serve at their invitation.

### **Selection Process for Workers and Volunteers**

United Methodist volunteers are needed during the relief and recovery phase of a disaster. We embody the UMCOR saying “early in and last out”, by being on the ground immediately when invited, and staying until all the recovery work is done.

People volunteer as news stories stimulate their sense of duty. Those who show up to volunteer or call into the calling center need detailed directives on what to do and how. Most volunteers do not understand the process of disaster relief and recovery. Patience is key while working with these individuals. Be sure to let volunteers know what will be expected of them before, during, and after volunteering.

### **The Spiritual and Emotional Care of Disaster Survivors**

The church will address the following needs in any disaster:

#### ***Spiritual***

- Those affected by a disaster will ask many difficult questions, some of which may have no answer. Some individuals may ask, “Why did this happen?” “Is this God’s judgment on me?” “Am I or my family to blame for this?” “I must have done something wrong or bad to make this happen.” “Did God make this happen?” These are just samples yet are not limited to questions that may be heard. One of the best responses was said by a clergy following a disaster, “*These are things that happen.*” This is **not** the opportunity to have a theological discussion!
- Individuals need to be allowed to express their emotional response to someone who knows how to listen. This is not a time for judgment nor telling the survivors how they should or should not feel.
- Worship is an important opportunity, focusing on the assurance of God’s love and care. Liturgical churches need to provide some informal time for individual sharing. Non-liturgical churches need to provide as much familiar structure in a service as possible.

#### ***Emotional***

- The local church and Conference are important in providing a caring presence; it can provide emotional support and help to re-establish a sense of community.
- Clergy and other trained people with expertise in counseling are always needed in times of disaster. This is not the time to get into a heavy counseling dialogue with any individual.
- By being present with those stricken and survivors, the church provides emotional support and helps to re-establish a sense of community. Individuals of all ages need to know that they are not alone in days of chaos and beyond.

***Physical***

- Local churches can provide volunteers at every stage of the disaster and for many different tasks. Individuals are needed to answer the phones, take messages from walk-ins, help survivors with the filling out of FEMA assistance, provide snacks and drinks, assisting volunteers with the clean-up of homes and property, providing meals for volunteers and much, much more.

***Facilities***

- Local churches can be used for Red Cross shelters, temporary offices for relief activities, meeting space, food preparation and/or mass feeding for volunteers, the “hub” for the Great Plains Disaster Response Volunteers (our home away from home) and so much more.

***Financial***

- Whenever a disaster occurs, there is always the need for financial assistance. No matter how many relief agencies there are, or how involved the federal government may be, there are usually about 75% of the needs which remain unmet due to governmental restrictions, low insurance payment, lost opportunities or other reasons.
- There are always survivors who “fall through the cracks” and have no place to turn for help, except for the local church.
- Very often there are needs that do not appear until many of the other relief agencies have left the area. Yet the Local Church remains, and this is the primary reason the church must be prepared to deal with disasters not only at the onset, but also for the long haul.

***Organizational***

- During the long-term recovery phase, Long-Term Recovery Groups can be created in the areas of the most severe damage.
- The goal of the Long-Term Recovery Group (LTRG) is to return the survivor to a safe, secure, and healthy home within a reasonable time frame.
- The LTRG is often a composite of volunteers who bring as many relief agencies as possible to the table to aid the survivors in their recovery. The LTRG may operate under a church or voluntary agency’s 501© (3) nonprofit status and may obtain the assistance of a paid and trained Disaster Case Manager who works independently with survivors on their recovery.
- The LTRG area of responsibility may be one community or several surrounding counties.
- As the LTRG organizes with a chair, vice-chair, secretary, treasurer, and their operational mission statement, they will contact national disaster organizations such as UMCOR, Southern Baptist, Lutheran Disaster Services, Mennonite Disaster Services and others to respond with financial and/or construction expertise.

- The Disaster Case Manager will contact the survivor with the unmet need and match the resources available to the needs.
- United Methodist have a long history of being very active in the Long-Term Recovery Groups and in leading Disaster Case Management trainings and activities.

### **The Grieving Process**

Grieving people must perform four tasks to achieve recovery. Each task must be completed by each survivor:

- Accept the reality of what has happened.
- Experience the pain of the loss.
- Adjust to a new situation, or their “new normal”.
- Begin to invest in and take steps toward the new.

### **The Disillusionment Phase for Survivors**

As disasters evolve, there’s a fourth development phase that drops heavily on survivors. It tends to show up during the relief or recovery phases and when it comes, illusions fade, disillusionment flourishes, anger erupts, and major depression takes root.

Each phase of a disaster (rescue, relief, recovery) requires that caregivers approach survivors with a great deal of sensitivity. Too often, caregivers just don’t have the sensitivity, propelled as they are by protocols and personal agendas. Our need to be needed, schedule, deep-buried prejudices, fears, and judgmental nature can get in the way of understanding. Instead of allowing survivors to reclaim a measure of control over life, we rip more control away from them as we try to satisfy our own needs or overcome our fears.

In the early days following a disaster, survivors alternate between numbing shock and excessive activity coming from adrenaline pumped emotional energy. They are not yet at their lowest point. Soon after a disaster, survivors are sustained in part by an illusion that drives them to declare, “We’re going to be fine. We’ll be back where we were before you ever notice!”

The truth is that it will never again be exactly as it was pre-disaster. For most survivors, things turn out well. It will be tough going, but it will turn out okay. A few will be better off than they were. Unfortunately, others recover poorly and will be much worse off. Yet, for everyone, it will not be the same. Everyone must re-adjust to a new life, and this is extremely difficult.

Caregiver strategies must help survivors regain a sense of control over life. Everything we do for survivors must be done to preserve their dignity and not impede their movement through the four steps above.

***We should do nothing to impede survivors in this grieving process.***

After a disaster, survivors face a puzzling array of assistance programs, titles, acronyms, and long complicated forms to complete. They are at the mercy of others who know disaster “lingo” and have the knowledge that brings power over others. That power can easily be abused.

Most Americans do not like their privacy invaded, either. Disaster survivors who never before have had to ask for help are asked deeply personal questions about income, business, and family life. They must reveal personal business to total strangers. And to “beg” for help is another blow to their mental stability. That is how many survivors see their recovery, as having to beg for help. As they begin to understand just how dependent they are, how much uncertainty and work lie ahead, how recovery is well beyond a quick fix, how their privacy has been invaded – it’s so depressing.

We help to minimize their depression by giving them voice! We invite them to tell us their stories and to share their feelings – we listen. We offer them the ability to restore some sense of control by taking ownership of their recovery. They could not control the disaster, yet they can control their recovery and the steps forward.

### **Managing Expectations of Survivors**

Contributing to survivor disillusionment are all of the media reports of huge dollar amounts coming to the disaster area from the state and federal government. Survivors naively expect a fat check to show up to make everything better. The untold story is that most government money is designated for restoration of infrastructure and low-interest disaster loans to homeowners and businesses. No one can beat these low-interest disaster loans (if they qualify), but they are loans, which only adds to their debt.

In Presidential declared disasters that include Individual Assistance, grant money is available from FEMA to all eligible homeowners, such as for temporary housing and home repair. Government funding is deceptive, as it is classified as “up to” a certain maximum amount. Most federal money given out is usually for less than the maximum allowable amount and is related to a specific need. ***Government money is given only to those who have unmet needs after personal resources – savings, insurance, and the ability to qualify for a loan have been exhausted.***

Contributing also to illusions are false expectations of what the non-governmental agencies can provide. Many expect the faith-based and other organizations to fix it all. Often, we must tell survivors that we are not able to assist them in the way, or to the degree, that they expect us to. Saying “no” is extremely hard but say it we must. Fortunately, our saving grace is that the church is not limited by the strict policies and procedures that govern other agencies. We have flexibility and creativity within our Conference Disaster Response Team and our Policy and Procedures, willing volunteers, and with God’s help we provide a lot of healing from our limited resources.

### ***Additional Information on Training Classes***

- ❖ Basic Disaster 101 provides an understanding of the disaster response system and how Great Plains United Methodist Conference is part of the protocols of UMCOR, State and Federal Governments.
- ❖ UMCOR Early Response Team (ERT) is a specialized training for youth in grades 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>, and an individual age 18 and older. Volunteers must be able to respond to a disaster

on short notice and work with a self-contained team in difficult circumstances. An UMCOR and Great Plains Disaster Response badge will be earned after passing this training and after completing and meeting all requirements for Safe Gatherings and Sterling Volunteers (UMCOR). The photo ID card and ERT credentialing are good for three years and will then need recertification.

- ❖ United Methodist Volunteer in Mission Team Leader Training (UMVIM)
- ❖ Disaster Case Management Training (for community)
- ❖ Long-Term Recovery Group Establishment (for community)
- ❖ Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) (for community)
- ❖ Local Church Emergency Planning Training is provided so you can make sure your local church is ready for any type of emergency or disaster.
- ❖ Connecting Neighbors training looks at what it means to be a ready church, a ready congregant, and how to readily respond in your community.
- ❖ Active Shooter Awareness and Recovery training encompasses the Run-Hide-Fight method of protection, along with Hospitality, and what it looks like for your recovery for your facilities and congregants.
- ❖ Stop-the-Bleed teaches you how to respond to a large open wound on an individual.
- ❖ Volunteer Reception Center (for community)
- ❖ Disaster Damage Assessment (for community)

For information on any of these trainings please send an email to [disastercoordinator@greatplainsumc.org](mailto:disastercoordinator@greatplainsumc.org)

## Acknowledgements

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Publishing rights are reserved by the Great Plains United Methodist Disaster Response Ministry. Portions or sections may be reproduced for use by any church, congregation, fellowship, denomination, and community of faith within the broad religious community for purposes of their own disaster preparedness, response, relief, and recovery or as they deem applicable. Acknowledgment in writing of such use would be appreciated by the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church and The Great Plains United Methodist Disaster Response Ministry by noting: "Portions of this document have been reprinted by permission of the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church and the Great Plains United Methodist Disaster Response Ministry." Items reproduced from the Appendix need no notice. This permission is granted without need to ask for it, however, none of the material contained in the text or Appendix may be reproduced for inclusion in any document that is to be sold, directly, or indirectly.

The above rights are also extended to any non-profit 501 © (3) group operating in the field of disaster preparedness, response, relief and recovery.

Below is a partial listing of those who have provided advice, encouragement, support and assistance.

Advent Community Services  
 Christian Reformed World Relief Committee  
 Church World Service  
 Federal Emergency Management Agency  
 Emergency Management Institute  
 Kansas Department of Emergency Management  
 National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster  
 Nebraska Association of Emergency Management  
 United Methodist Volunteers in Missions

Mennonite Disaster Services  
 The American Red Cross  
 Church of the Brethren  
 Salvation Army

## Managing the Disaster with Media Outlets

- ❖ Statements on behalf of the Annual Conference are to be made only by the Bishop or the designated spokesperson. Other staff will be directed as to what, if any, responses they may make to media queries (confirmation of spelling of conference, individual names, etc.) The Communications Department is the forerunner with all statements.
- ❖ Response will be made to all media queries as quickly and accurately as possible. The goal is to respond within 90 minutes. The response may just be that you are still pulling together the facts and will call them again in a specified period of time with the requested information.
- ❖ All media will be treated fairly. The initial information about the disaster may be released in response to the question of one reporter. However, the information will be released to all media. There will be no “exclusive” interviews.
- ❖ Telephone release of statements in response to queries will be followed by delivery of the information by fax, e-mail, or in-person as soon as possible.
- ❖ News conferences will be used when there is widespread interest in the disaster or when vital information needs to be widely dispersed.

### Conference Disaster Team and Media

*Statements on behalf of the Annual Conference are to be made by the Bishop or the designate spokesperson. With that being said, here are some guidelines to follow:*

- ❖ Accept or decline an interview – you do not have to talk with the media.
- ❖ Know the current situation with the disaster.
- ❖ Be comfortable.
- ❖ Give reasons why you do not have information. It is okay to say, “I don’t know” if you don’t but NEVER say “no comment”.
- ❖ Pause to think before you answer.
- ❖ You can say “Our conference communication department will be releasing a statement; please give me your contact information and I will make sure they receive it.

## Conference Disaster Response Team Action Plan & Handbook

### *Accountability*

1. The Conference Disaster Response Team is responsible to the Connecting Council, on which the Chair is a member.
2. This team shall recommend policy and procedures, it is not an operational group. Operations are the responsibility of the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and organized under an Incident Command System.

### *Membership & Duties/Responsibilities*

1. The membership of the Conference Disaster Response Team shall consist of:
  - a. Twelve (12) members elected by the Annual Conference to include eight (8) of the ten (10) Regional Disaster Leaders and four (4) at-large members.
  - b. The following members shall have voice without vote:
    - i. Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
    - ii. Conference Executive Director or designee
    - iii. Conference Treasurer or designee
2. The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator is responsible for coordination of disaster response activities in cooperation with the Conference Disaster Response Team.
3. The Conference Disaster Response Team shall write policies and procedures along with the CDRC.
  - a. All written policies and procedures are to be approved by the Connecting Council or by the Annual Conference.
4. The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and the Conference Disaster Response Team shall coordinate between the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) and the Great Plains Annual Conference.
  - a. Consultation shall be made on recommendations to improve the Conference Disaster operations.
  - b. The CDRC and Conference Disaster Team shall request through the Bishop's office, UMCOR participation within the conference when needed and necessary.
5. In a large and/or catastrophic disaster within the bounds of the Annual Conference, Conference Disaster Team members will be in charge of as essential function during the relief phase such as and yet not limited to: visiting ERT team coordinator, base camp coordinator, calling center operation, equipment manager, volunteer reception center administrative duties, and many, many, many more.

## Great Plains Conference Disaster Response Fund Guidelines

1. The Great Plains Conference Disaster Response Fund is for the relief of people who have suffered from a disaster(s) within the Great Plains Conference and are not to be used for ongoing socio-economic concerns. This guideline is mainly a reference from the Policy and Procedures of Disaster Grant Funds.
2. Financial assistance will be considered upon submission of a Great Plains Disaster Fund Financial Assistance Request Form ***submitted by any one of the following: United Methodist Clergy, Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, Regional Disaster Leader, District Superintendent, a person appointed to represent the Great Plains Conference on a Long-Term Recovery Group, or an Emergency Manager.***
3. The amount of assistance will be dependent upon the unmet needs expressed, the number of requests and the availability of funds. Priority is given to low-income homeowners, elderly, single families, disabled, and those with no or low insurance.
4. All requests for expenditures from the Disaster Response Fund shall be submitted first to the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator who will vet each request and speak with the applicant concerning their need(s). The application will then be sent to the Conference Disaster Team Chair who will review and then forward to the members of the Conference Disaster Team for discussion and a vote. All required documentation is then submitted to the Conference Treasures office by the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator for payment to a vendor. If payment is made to an individual, receipts for payment for disaster related items are to be submitted within 90 days of receiving the check or refund the donation.
5. The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator may approve requests of up to \$3,000. All requests that exceed \$3,000 must be approved by a vote of the Conference Disaster Response Team in either a conference call meeting or by email vote as appropriate. Regional Disaster Leaders may approve up to \$1,000. A higher request from the Regional Disaster Leader will need to be approved by the Conference Disaster Team via a conference call or email vote.
6. Personal out-of-pocket expenses are not reimbursable. This includes, yet is not limited to, expenses paid from savings accounts, credit cards, or other personal resources of the homeowner.
7. The Great Plains Disaster Response Coordinator, in case of an emergency, can approve grant requests up to \$3,000. Grant request that exceeds \$3,000 must be presented to the Conference Disaster Response Team for discussion and vote. The Conference Team may consider requests in a conference call meeting or by e-mail by majority vote.
8. At the time of the disaster, and if adequate funding is available, the Great Plains Conference Disaster Response Coordinator may request up to \$5,000 from the Conference Disaster Response Team to meet emerging needs. Appropriate documentation of expenditures must be submitted to the Finance Department.

## **Disaster Response Documentation**



## Great Plains Conference of The United Methodist Church

*Disaster Response Ministry*

*An UMCOR Partner*

### Youth (15-17) Release of Liability Form

*Please read before signing, as this constitutes the agreement as a volunteer and the understanding of your working relationship as a volunteer with The Great Plains Disaster Response Ministry.*

I, \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge and state the following: I am \_\_\_\_\_ years old. I have chosen to travel with \_\_\_\_\_ (name of church or organization) to perform clean-up work following a natural disaster. Dates covered by this form \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that this work entails a risk of physical injury and often involves hard physical labor, heavy lifting and other strenuous activity. I understand that I will not be allowed to use power tools. 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 a natural 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 medical costs and expenses.

I certify that I have provided the appropriate parental or guardian release forms necessary to allow me to participate in these activities and to allow my sponsor to act on my behalf. With my signature on this agreement, I certify that I will be bound by the same terms and conditions. I understand that it is my responsibility and not of the supervising disaster agency to verify these items.

By my signature, for myself, my estate and my heirs, I release, discharge, indemnify and forever hold The Great Plains Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church and the Great Plains Conference Disaster Response Ministry, together with their 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 their negligence.

**Signature of Parent/Guardian** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Youth** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Witness Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

Home address \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian address \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Reachable Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

***Emergency Contact if Other than Parent or Guardian***

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Youth \_\_\_\_\_

Reachable Phone \_\_\_\_\_



## MEDICAL and EMERGENCY INFORMATION FORM

*(Team Leader should keep and carry original. A copy should be kept by the UMVIM Coordinator or local church until the missionary returns.)*

Mission/Project Dates:		Mission Site/Location:	
Name			Birthdate
Address			Home Phone (    )
City	State	Zip	Cell Phone (    )
Email			
Physician's Name		Physician's Phone (    ) Physician's Afterhours Phone (    )	
Physician's City/State			
Current Medications of Concern in an Emergency:			
Allergies (e.g. Food, Medications, Bee/Wasp Stings):			
Medical Insurance Co.			Phone (    )
Group			Policy No.
Driver's License #/State of Issue/Expiration (US mission/out of state): OR - Passport #/Place of Issue/Expiration (Int'l mission):			
<i>Please attach a copy of your insurance card (all missions), Driver's License (US mission/out of state), and/or Passport (int'l mission).</i>			
I, _____, authorize _____,			
<small>(UMVIM participant)</small>		<small>(another adult on journey)</small>	

if I am unable to do so, to consent to any necessary examination, anesthetic, medical diagnosis, surgery treatment and/or hospital care rendered to me under the general or special supervision and on the advice of any physician or surgeon licensed to practice medicine by the state in which he/she practices, during the duration of the journey identified above.

Signature of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(for youth under 18 parents must also sign Parental Consent Form)



Great Plains Conference of The United Methodist Church

Disaster Response Ministry

An UMCOR Partner

**Homeowner Release of Liability**

This is to be filled out by the homeowner **Before** any of the volunteers do ANY work on the home.

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ REACHABLE PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_ am the owner and occupant of the above listed  
*Homeowner Name – please print*  
property, I give permission to volunteers from the Great Plains Conference of The United Methodist Church Disaster Response Ministry to work on my property for the purpose of repairing my home due to the recent disaster. I understand that these are volunteers, not professionals working for profit, and that no warrant is made as to the quality of work done.

In consideration of the volunteer services to be rendered to me or on my property by the volunteers, I the undersigned release and agree to hold harmless the volunteers, Great Plains Conference of The United Methodist Church, and any related agency, from any liability, injury, damages, loss, accident, delay or irregularity related to the aforementioned volunteer services.

This release covers all rights and causes of action of every kind, nature, and description, which the undersigned ever had, now has, or but for this release, may have. This release binds the undersigned and his/her heirs, representatives, and assignees.

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

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Great Plains Conference of The United Methodist Church

Disaster Response Ministry

An UMCOR Partner

Volunteer Group Intake and Confirmation Record

Date Called: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Confirmed: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Reachable Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Departure Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Number/Age: Women: 15-19 \_\_\_ 20-35 \_\_\_ 36-49 \_\_\_ 50-65 \_\_\_ over 65 \_\_\_

Number/Age: Men: 15-19 \_\_\_ 20-35 \_\_\_ 36-49 \_\_\_ 50-65 \_\_\_ over 65 \_\_\_

Summary of Group's Construction Skills

Indicate the group's skill level for each of the following with #1 being highly skilled, #2 being skilled, #3 being experienced, #4 inexperienced yet follows directions:

- |                          |                         |                             |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ___ Carpentry            | ___ Heating/Cooling     | ___ Typing                  |
| ___ Cleanup(light/heavy) | ___ Mason               | ___ Data Entry              |
| ___ Concrete             | ___ Painter             | ___ Cook                    |
| ___ Chainsaw             | ___ Plumber             | ___ Construction Supervisor |
| ___ Drywall Hanger       | ___ Roofer              | ___ Equipment Manager       |
| ___ Drywall Finisher     | ___ Electrician         | ___ Errands                 |
| ___ Flooring             | ___ Phonebank Attendant | ___ Other: (please          |
| list) _____              |                         |                             |

Large Equipment Operator and Equipment available: \_\_\_\_\_

Special certifications for any of the above: \_\_\_\_\_



**Great Plains Conference of The United Methodist Church**

*Disaster Response Ministry*

*An UMCOR Partner*

**Volunteer Hours Report**

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

Work Location (address): \_\_\_\_\_

Work Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Out of Conference Travel Dates/Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Number of Volunteers							
Hours Worked							
Total Hours Worked							

In-Kind Donations Received:

Monetary Donations Received:

Equipment Used:

Other information:

Team Leader Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Lay of Land:  n/a  flat  on a slope  sunken area Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Adequate water drainage from house:  n/a  no  yes Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Standing water under house:  n/a  no  yes Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 NOTES:

Delivery of materials:  n/a  no  yes, location: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Worker's parking:  n/a  no  yes, location: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Portable toilet:  n/a  no  yes, location: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Storage container:  n/a  no  yes, location: \_\_\_\_\_  
 NOTES:

Pests:  none observed  dogs  snakes  wasp/bees/hornets  rats  termites or ants  Other \_\_\_\_\_

SAFETY CONCERNS:  n/a If applicable, please note:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**EXTERIOR**

**FOUNDATION** ( N/A  NEED REPAIR)

TYPE:  concrete slab  raised slab  block (solid)  block (pier)  wood pilings  
 combination  other \_\_\_\_\_

UNDERPINNING:  n/a  block  wood  vinyl  metal  none  other \_\_\_\_\_

VENTILATION:  n/a  adequate \* inadequate (\*Recommend repair)

VAPOR BARRIER:  n/a  no  yes

SUMP PUMP:  n/a  no  yes

CLEARANCE UNDER HOUSE:  n/a (if applicable, note # of \_\_\_\_\_ inches)

CRAWL SPACE OPENING:  n/a  no  yes, location \_\_\_\_\_

REPAIR NOTES:

**ROOF**      ( N/A    NEED REPAIR)

ROOF TYPE:  n/a    asphalt    rolled    wood    metal    combination    other \_\_\_\_\_

ROOF SIZE:  n/a   LENGTH \_\_\_\_\_ WIDTH \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL AREA \_\_\_\_\_ SLOPE \_\_\_\_\_

VENTILATION:  n/a    adequate    \*inadequate (\*Recommend repair)

Location of ventilation visible:  none    roof    gable    soffit

GUTTERS:  n/a    no    yes   NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

DRIP EDGE:  n/a    no    yes   NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

FLASHING:  n/a    no    yes   NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

CHIMNEY:  n/a    no    yes   NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

REPAIR NOTES:

**ELECTRICAL:**      ( N/A    NEED REPAIR)

SERVICE CABLE/METER BOX:  n/a    acceptable    UNSAFE    need repair

BREAKER/FUSE PANEL BOX:  n/a    acceptable    UNSAFE    need repair

LIGHT FIXTURES:                       n/a    acceptable    UNSAFE    need repair    missing

SWITCHES/RECEPTACLES:         n/a    acceptable    UNSAFE    need repair    missing

REPAIR NOTES:

**MECHANICAL:**      ( N/A    NEED REPAIR)

HVAC TYPE:  n/a    window unit    split    package    none    other \_\_\_\_\_

AIR CONDITIONING:    yes    no

HEAT:                       yes    no

HEAT SOURCE:             gas    electric    kerosene    wood    coal    other \_\_\_\_\_

REPAIR NOTES:

**CEILINGS:**            ( N/A         NEED REPAIR)

CEILING TYPE:             n/a    sheetrock    paneling    plywood    other \_\_\_\_\_

GENERAL CONDITION:  n/a    acceptable    UNSAFE    yes, need repair (if yes give location)

Location \_\_\_\_\_

WATER INFILTRATION VISIBLE:             n/a             yes, need repair (if yes, give location)

Location \_\_\_\_\_

REPAIR NOTES:

**Miscellaneous**

**Smoke Detectors:**         no    yes (min of two)    working    not working, need batteries/replacing

NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

**Carbon monoxide detectors:**    n/a    no    yes    working    not working, need replacing

NOTES:

**Kitchen countertops:**    n/a    acceptable    not acceptable, need repair (please specify)

NOTES:

**Appliances:**                     n/a         appliances need repair/replacement

Washer \_\_\_\_\_

Dryer \_\_\_\_\_

Stove \_\_\_\_\_

Microwave \_\_\_\_\_

Refrigerator \_\_\_\_\_

Dishwasher \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES:



## Great Plains Conference - United Methodist Church

Disaster Recovery Ministry

*An UMCOR Partner*

### *Long Term Recovery Needs Assessment/Information and Referral*

