

DISASTER



RELIEF

Volunteer Manual



LCMS WORLD MISSION



Table of Contents

Introduction	2
What is Disaster Relief?	3
Emergency relief	3
Recovery	3
Long-term rebuilding	3
Qualities of a “Good” Relief Worker	4
Taking Care of Yourself	4
Safety Tips	5
Behavior Guidelines for Relief Workers	6
Responding with Love and Compassion	6
Signs of normal grief	7
Signs of complicated or unhealthy grief	7
Responding to the emotions of people affected by the disaster	7
Bridge-building behaviors	8
Things to expect	8
Teams	8
Team Structure	8
Team Leader	9
Devotion Leader	9
First-aid Coordinator	9
Debriefing	9
Team Debriefing	9
Individual Debriefing	9
Sharing Your Experience	10
District Assistance	10
Before You Go	10
Prayer Support	10
Prepare	10
Precautions	11
Paperwork	11
Conclusion	12
Appendix A: Packing Checklist	13
Appendix B: Important Contact Information	14
Appendix C: Additional Resources	15

Introduction

“We know what love is because Jesus gave His life for us. That's why we must give our lives for each other. If we have all we need and see one of our own people in need, we must have pity on that person, or else we cannot say we love God. Children, you show love for others by truly helping them, and not merely by talking about it.” (1 John 3: 16-18 CEV)

“Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.” (Mark 10: 43-45 NIV)

When disaster strikes, we have a responsibility to care for our neighbors whose lives have been directly impacted by tragedy. Amid all of the suffering and destruction, there is also an enormous **opportunity** to reach out and minister to the many immediate, physical needs, while at the same time sharing the love of Christ.

LCMS World Relief/Human Care and LCMS World Mission work together in partnership to carry out disaster relief. When a disaster occurs within the United States, these two agencies also work hand in hand with the districts to respond to the needs in the regions affected by the hurricane. When a disaster occurs outside the U.S., LCMS World Relief/Human Care and LCMS World Mission work together with our worldwide partners to respond to the need for disaster relief. These groups work together to determine specific needs and opportunities for service and begin to coordinate the relief effort.

During times of crisis, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has many individuals whose hearts are moved to help the people whose lives were affected by the hurricane. What an excellent occasion to work together with our brothers and sisters in Christ, sharing Christ's love with those who need to experience it firsthand!

This manual is especially intended for those districts, congregations, and teams that will be going to the areas devastated by a disaster and ministering to the needs of the people there. Thank you in advance for your service. Please use this manual as a resource to help you be most effective in your work. Let us know how we can help to support you. If you have questions, please contact a placement counselor at LCMS World Mission at 1-800-433-3954.

What is Disaster Relief?

Webster's dictionary defines disaster as: "a sudden calamitous event bringing great damage, loss, or destruction." Hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, and earthquakes each certainly qualify as disasters. The destruction wrought by these and other disasters call for a response. That response is known as **disaster relief** and consists of various phases.

Emergency relief is the immediate response to the disaster. Emergency relief usually begins within the first 24 to 48 hours and lasts up to six weeks. Emergency relief is usually initiated, coordinated, and carried out by agencies that specialize in this type of service. Professionals and trained volunteers typically serve in this capacity. Emergency relief often includes:

- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Supplying food and water
- ◆ Crisis counseling
- ◆ Emergency medical care
- ◆ Shelter
- ◆ Transportation

Recovery is an intermediate phase and follows emergency relief. This is the phase when utility companies work to get the electricity, water, gas, and telephones back online. Community leaders assess the damage, and develop strategies for rebuilding. People who live in the affected areas begin trying to get their lives back under control. Depending on the extent of the disaster, this phase can last anywhere from a week to a few months. Recovery includes many of the same activities as the emergency relief phase, though with less urgency, as well as:

- ◆ Clean-up
- ◆ Repairs
- ◆ Short-term financial assistance

Recovery is the phase in which relief work volunteers can begin to get involved. Teams that are totally self-sufficient (i.e. can provide their own housing, food, water, bathroom/shower facilities, equipment, etc.) can offer assistance to churches and neighborhoods during the clean-up.

During this phase, teams that are not fully self-sufficient **should wait** until there are services in place that can enable them to be a real help to the affected areas.

Churches, groups, and individuals that want to help during the recovery phase can do so by offering financial assistance to agencies that are carrying out relief work, such as LCMS World Relief/Human Care at <http://worldrelief.lcms.org>, or 1-888-930-4438. If they would like to send supplies, they should contact Orphan Grain Train at www.ogt.org or (402)371-7393.

Long-term rebuilding usually takes four months to two years or longer. People who were affected by the disaster go through a variety of emotions, from elation to despair to determination. The rebuilding phase involves reconstruction and major repair work, as well as long-term support needs for the people whose lives were radically changed by the disaster. This type of work can take place in the region where the disaster occurred, as well as in relocation areas for people who were displaced by the disaster.

Long-term rebuilding is the phase that will need the most volunteers. We have an excellent opportunity to reach out to the people whose lives were dramatically changed by a disaster. By serving as a volunteer on a relief work team, you can tangibly share the love Christ with these people. In many cases it is likely that your church's district will have the opportunity to reach out to a sister congregation(s) that was affected by the disaster. There will be opportunities to serve those congregations and their members, as well as a wealth of opportunities to serve the communities throughout areas that were affected by the disaster.

Qualities of a "Good" Relief Worker

Our Savior gives us the ideal example of being a servant. He came and lived among us, taking on our sorrows, and suffering with us. He put others' needs before His own needs. He had compassion on us. He is our Good Shepherd, who laid down His life for us. As a relief worker, you have the opportunity to be God's hands, serving the people whose lives have been impacted by a disaster. LCMS relief workers bring many different gifts and abilities to the relief effort. However, they should all share some qualities.

- ◆ Relief workers should have the fruit of the Spirit, especially: love, patience, kindness, gentleness, and self-control.
- ◆ Relief workers must follow the directions of those in charge.
- ◆ Relief workers must be flexible, flexible, flexible in every situation, before and during their service.
- ◆ Relief workers are called on the basis of skills that are needed and placed according to needs, talents, and availability.
- ◆ Relief workers should be prepared to use every opportunity to share the hope and joy that come from their faith in Christ.

Relief workers should be strong, both physically and in their faith. Doing disaster relief is hard work; the days are long and the work can be exhausting. Being in good physical condition is important. Doing disaster relief work is also draining spiritually; seeing so much destruction and suffering day after day depends on strong faith to be able to continue the work.

Relief Workers **DON'T**:

- ◆ expect to be the first called;
- ◆ expect to work with only your group;
- ◆ expect favors or preferential treatment;
- ◆ require everyone else to accommodate them;
- ◆ over-reach their limitations.

Taking Care of Yourself

Doing disaster relief work is very stressful. Relief workers *will experience* the effects of this stress in one form or another. It is important to monitor yourself so that you can deal with this stress in a healthy, effective way. You should keep track of how often you take a break; how long you work; what you are eating; your privacy needs; and your personal support system while

you are serving as a relief worker. Members of a relief team help each other monitor these things. By taking care of yourself, you will be better able to serve the needs of those affected by hurricane. You have the responsibility for your own personal preparation, motivation, attitude, assessment, and participation.

Safety Tips

Know your limits, and work within them. This includes your physical limitations (health, strength, and endurance); emotional health (stress management); and mental capacity (knowledge and skills).

Use the checklist at the end of this manual to make sure that you have the items you need to be properly equipped and to help maintain your comfort and mental health.

- ◆ Wear the proper clothing for the work you will be doing; this includes having the right footwear and proper safety equipment for the job at hand.
- ◆ Avoid sitting or standing in the same position for an extended period of time.
- ◆ Use sunscreen if you will be outdoors during much of the day.
- ◆ Drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration.
- ◆ Take frequent breaks, especially if you are working in the heat.
- ◆ Do NOT base your workload on that of another person.
- ◆ Pace yourself.
- ◆ Use caution when working in dangerous conditions (i.e. electric lines; broken glass or other debris; exposed or hidden nails; vehicle traffic, etc.).

It is strongly recommended that each team have a first-aid coordinator. Report all injuries to this person. If your team does not have a first-aid coordinator, as soon as you arrive at your site of service, your team leader should find out how to deal with any injuries that might occur. Keep a copy of your Emergency Information Reference Form handy while you are serving.

Here are a few thoughts to help guard the safety of relief workers:

- ◆ Before entering a building, make certain the structure has been examined for potential hazards and is safe to enter.
- ◆ Before entering damaged buildings, be sure that all utilities (electricity, gas, telephone, cable, etc.) have been turned off. Check with utility companies if necessary.
- ◆ Always assume downed electrical lines are energized until power companies notify you they have been turned off. Even then, use care around lines since they can become energized due to generators improperly used in homes. They may also become entangled in equipment or with your body.
- ◆ Wear appropriate safety equipment for the job at hand. Heavy-soled, steel-toed shoes, and gloves should be used in disaster areas. Hard hats are often needed.
- ◆ Bring flashlights or other lighting equipment for dark buildings.
- ◆ Power tools should be operated only by those with the proper training.
- ◆ When using chainsaws or power tools, always use safety equipment and never work alone.

- ◆ Do not enter flooded areas without probing the area to determine where there are holes or hidden objects.
- ◆ ONLY drink and use water that has been verified as safe.
- ◆ Make safety a priority.
- ◆ Consider taking a first-aid/CPR course before beginning your service.

Behavior Guidelines for Relief Workers

During challenging and stressful situations it can be easy to forget why you are serving and who you are representing. It is important to remember that you are God's ambassador, His hands and His voice. Your words and deeds should be a constant reflection of the love Christ has for each of the individuals whose lives have been impacted by a disaster. You have the opportunity to be a light shining in the darkness, a city on a hill, offering hope and comfort. Do not allow careless words or actions to diminish the work being done.

As you work to repair damaged buildings and construct new ones, remember that you are there to serve the people who were affected by the disaster. Listen to them. Let them tell you their stories if they want to. But also be prepared to refer them to someone who is trained to handle problems that are beyond your capabilities.

Respect the property of people who were affected by the disaster. Things that seem destroyed or damaged beyond repair may hold precious memories for someone.

Respect the privacy of every individual.

When taking pictures, whether of people or scenes of destruction, be sensitive to the feelings of the people involved. If they are present, always ask permission.

Before you give out information about available resources and aid, make certain that the information you have is correct. Also, when you talk with people about the overall disaster situation, make certain that your information is correct. Don't contribute to rumors.

Relief workers have the chance to act out their faith in a tangible way, and often that action will open the door to share that faith in words. Be prepared to share with people the reason you are serving: Jesus Christ and His love for all people.

Responding with Love and Compassion

Most of those affected by the disaster have experienced various levels of loss: loss of property, loss of keepsakes and memories, and/or loss of life. They will often be grieving. This is important and normal for them to work through; however, it is also important for you to recognize what is happening and how to respond.

Additionally, since you will be immersed into a very stressful, emotion-filled situation, you may begin to feel some of this grief as well. It is very important that you pay attention to feelings that you might have and talk with someone about them.

Signs of normal grief

Feelings might include: sadness, guilt, anxiety, loneliness, abandonment by God, emptiness, fatigue, helplessness, shock and disbelief, yearning for the way life used to be, relief that you and loved ones survived, numbness, and anger.

Physical reactions such as hollowness in the stomach, tightness in the chest and throat, oversensitivity to noise, feeling short of breath, weakness in the muscles, lack of energy, and dry mouth might occur.

You might experience *thoughts* of confusion, preoccupation, "I must be going crazy", and visual and auditory hallucinations.

Behaviors such as sleep disturbances (too much or too little), appetite disturbances (too much or too little), catching yourself wandering around, forgetting what you were doing, social withdrawal, restless over-activity, crying, suppressed crying, and dreaming about your trauma and loss are all normal.

Signs of complicated or unhealthy grief

These include:

- ◆ excluding friends, family, or activities;
- ◆ prolonged feelings of emptiness and the worthlessness of life;
- ◆ having thoughts of self-hurt or self-destruction;
- ◆ abuse of alcohol, prescription or illegal drugs.

These are all signals that the individual needs help from someone experienced in helping people through crisis and loss. You should refer these people to a trained professional, such as a pastor or counselor.

Responding to the emotions of people affected by the disaster

Many people whose lives were impacted by a disaster have had much of their independence and autonomy taken away from them. They often feel as though they are not being listened to. As a relief worker, you should try to communicate to people affected by the disaster that you are willing to listen to them share their feelings, and that you will take them seriously. You can do this verbally or non-verbally. Some of the non-verbal ways you can do this are tone of voice, eye contact, and a relaxed, attentive posture.

This sharing allows the beginning of a relationship to form and is the beginning of mutual trust and caring. You are building a bridge. This trust is essential for effective sharing of your faith; people need to know that you genuinely care about them as individuals. Basically, you need to earn the right to help these people as individuals. There will be many relief agencies in and out of their lives during the coming months. You need to show that you are not just there to tear down, repair, and construct buildings, but also to meet their needs, even if it is uncomfortable for you.

Bridge-building behaviors

- ◆ **Accepting:** Accept the fact that you cannot completely understand the people or what they have been through. This is just a beginning, so don't become too frustrated with yourself.
- ◆ **Being aware:** Be aware that at times you may feel your own prejudices. You may become frustrated with the way things are or the way people behave. Don't deny the feelings; own them. Only then can you begin to understand the reasons behind them. Why are you frustrated? Being aware will help you grow in understanding of the differences.
- ◆ **Listening:** Listen more than you talk.
- ◆ **Giving:** Give of yourself. Take the initiative to reach out to the people whose lives were changed by a disaster. We often tend to shy away from getting involved in people's personal lives. Take a risk and talk with people. Trust God to work through your words and actions.
- ◆ **Enjoying:** Enjoy the people and your time with them as much as possible. If you don't take yourself too seriously, you won't burn out as easily. Help create an environment where people can share their struggles and laugh at themselves.

Things to expect

- ◆ The schedule won't happen as planned.
- ◆ Your expectations won't all be met.
- ◆ You will feel frustration. Refuse to complain.
- ◆ You will be stretched, challenged, and changed.
- ◆ God **will** work in you and through you.

Teams

Relief workers who are part of a team have a great support system available to them. Take advantage of it! You and your teammates should meet together regularly for support throughout your relief efforts, as well as once you return home. By meeting together, you can support and help each other as you deal with the stressful and emotionally taxing situations you will encounter during your relief work.

Many of you will be on a team with other people that you know, perhaps from your congregation or school. However, some of you might join a team of people that you meet for the first time as you work together. If you and your teammates have just met, we encourage you to exchange contact information so you can keep in contact once your service is completed. After your return home, it will be helpful to be able to talk with the people that shared your experience, even if you don't live near each other. They know exactly what you went through, and you can be a listening ear for them as well.

Team Structure

Each relief team should have a few basic roles covered within their team. These roles will help keep your team organized, cohesive, supportive, and effective as you serve. Each role is

important. In a few cases, more than one role might be filled by the same person. This is not ideal. The work you are doing is stressful, challenging work. Your team will be most effective if you share the responsibilities, so one person is not burdened unnecessarily.

Team Leader

This individual is the main contact person for all of your team's logistics before you begin your service. They will work with your district as well as with LCMS World Mission to coordinate getting your team ready to serve. They are responsible for distributing paperwork that needs to be filled out, and for collecting it and returning it to the appropriate person. They are responsible for making certain everyone on your team is covered by emergency evacuation insurance (see: Before You Go). The team leader should have a copy of each team member's Emergency Information Form and keep it handy throughout the trip. You should direct all of your questions about logistics to your team leader.

Devotion Leader

Teams should meet daily for devotions and prayer. One member of your team should be assigned the responsibility of coordinating this. That could mean that they lead the devotions and prayer time each day, or that they make up a schedule so each willing team member takes a turn leading the devotion and prayer time.

Your team will be given a devotional booklet by LCMS World Mission that will have Bible readings and devotions you can use each day, along with some questions for debriefing. This guide is useful so that your team can stay focused and encouraged in the midst of the destruction and hardship you will see.

First-aid Coordinator

We strongly recommend that each team have a first-aid coordinator. Report all injuries to this person. The first-aid coordinator is also responsible for determining how to deal with serious injuries or other health issues that might occur during your service. If your team does not have a specified first-aid coordinator, please make plans for how you will deal with injuries if they occur.

Debriefing

Team Debriefing

Emotionally, your relief work will be an experience few can understand unless they also serve as relief workers. You should meet daily with your teammates to debrief about the day's experiences. This sharing can help you process the different emotions, both positive and negative, that you experience as you are working each day. Questions for debriefing are available in the daily devotional booklet provided by LCMS World Mission.

Individual Debriefing

In order to remember all of the experiences you have during the relief work you do, you might consider keeping a journal. This will not only provide a record of your service once you return home, but will also give you the opportunity to do personal debriefing each day. You will have a

chance to reflect and think about your experience as you jot down the things that have happened. You might also want to take pictures, to remember your experiences. However, please be respectful of the people and places that you photograph. Ask permission before taking pictures when there are people present whose lives were changed by a disaster.

Sharing Your Experience

When you return home after your work is done, you will again need to debrief. Each person's "re-entry" into their home setting is different. You may return unchanged, but it is unlikely. More than likely you will return from this trip a different person with a different view. It is good for you to share your experiences with your family, friends, and church members.

People who did not go will be interested to hear about your experiences. Be prepared to you're your story, but recognize that they may not be interested in every detail. Prepare to talk about your personal experiences in a way that will best communicate the purpose of your trip. Be as visual as possible. Listeners will catch your passion.

District Assistance

Your team is also strongly encouraged to take advantage of your LCMS district's critical incident stress management resources. This is a service of your district, utilizing the skills of someone trained to work with people who have been through very stressful, crisis situations. Contact your district office to set up a time to meet with this counselor.

Before You Go

Before you begin your service, there are some important tasks that you should complete. Some of these are "just-in-case" precautions, and others are routine logistical steps. Each task is important.

Prayer Support

Before you depart for your service, involve your family, friends, and church members in the work you will be doing by enlisting their prayer support. Ask them to pray for you daily while you are serving, not only for your safety, but also for opportunities. Pray that God would use you and your team to touch people's lives with the love of Christ.

Prepare

Before you head out, you should determine exactly where you are going and how you will get there. This could be very simple, or it could turn out to be a greater challenge than you expect. Depending on where you are going, the normal roads that you would take to get to your destination might or might not be open. Try to plan a couple of alternate routes, in case the most direct route is not available.

If you are going to serve a congregation, talk with someone from that congregation before you head down, if possible. They might be able to share valuable information about the situation into which you are heading, as well as any special equipment you should bring.

Precautions

You should also be sure to read the information that the Center for Disease Control has posted about the disaster relief site you will be serving. You can find this information on their Web site at www.cdc.gov/travel. Please read this and take the appropriate precautions. This includes checking with your doctor to see if you need any recommended vaccinations.

In addition to obtaining the necessary vaccinations, every person who serves as a relief worker must purchase emergency evacuation insurance. If you are injured or become sick while serving, this insurance provides for evacuating you to a facility that can meet your medical needs. We recommend checking into HTH Travel Insurance's Trip Protection plan, which includes emergency evacuation insurance. The cost of this plan varies according to the participant's age. You can purchase a policy online, at www.hthtravelinsurance.com/trip_protection.cfm. You are also free to purchase emergency evacuation insurance from another insurance provider. You will be required to list the company and identification number of your policy on the Emergency Information Reference Form discussed below.

Paperwork

Before you serve, there are several pieces of important paperwork that you should complete. These can all be found on the LCMS World Mission Web site at www.lcmsworldmission.org/relief. The first form that you should fill out is the Disaster Relief Volunteer Info form. You need to fill it out and then give it to your pastor for his approval. Once he has signed it, have it returned to LCMS World Mission at the address listed on the form.

You will also need to fill out the following forms:

- ◆ Risk Disclosure Consent Waiver Agreement
- ◆ Medical Insurance Verification form
- ◆ Emergency Information Reference form

Once you have filled out these forms, return them to your team leader. Your team leader should collect all of your team's forms, and return them to LCMS World Mission in one large packet.

Conclusion

The relief effort to help those affected by a disaster is monumental. We thank you for your willingness to help in this way. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod cares about the people who have been affected by disasters, and we pray that God would raise up workers for the task of volunteer service. It will not be an easy task, but we trust that God will be with us as we go about this work.

As you strive to accomplish the task that God gives you to do, remember to always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. (1 Peter 3:15) Our hope in Christ is something that we willingly and joyfully share, especially at a time like this. May God use each of us to reach many individuals who are hurting from this disaster, with the saving message of His Son.

Appendix A: Packing Checklist

Although each location and team may require different items to bring, you can use this checklist to begin your packing.

Devotional Materials

- Bible and devotionals

Identification

- Driver's license
- Phone numbers (family, primary care doctor, employer, church, emergency contact)
- A copy of your Emergency Information Reference form

Miscellaneous Items

- Money/traveler's checks/credit and/or debit card
- Phone card
- Notebook and pencils or pens
- Envelopes and stamps
- Umbrella
- Camera and film
- Spare batteries
- Flashlight

Clothing

- Work shoes
- Waterproof footwear
- Sneakers
- Rain suit or poncho
- Jacket and/or coat (depending on temperature)
- Jeans or work pants

Health and Hygiene

- Prescription medicine
- Non-prescription drugs: Ibuprofen, Acetaminophen, diarrhea cure, antacids, laxative, etc.
- Allergy medicine
- Sunscreen (15+)
- Soap
- Hand sanitizer
- Laundry detergent
- Deodorant
- Feminine needs
- Mouthwash

Insurance Information

- Health insurance card
- Evacuation insurance card, if applicable

- Hair dryer
- Bedding (air mattress, sleeping bag, sheets and covers, etc.)
- Pillow
- Towels and washcloths
- Watch and/or alarm clock
- Water bottle
- Non-perishable snacks
- Bottled drinking water

- Socks
- Shirts
- Underwear
- Sleepwear
- Work gloves
- Hat/bandanas
- Laundry bag

- Toothbrush, toothpaste, and dental floss
- Shampoo and conditioner
- Comb and brush
- Hair spray
- Chap stick
- Shaving cream
- Razor
- Insect spray
- Lotion
- First-aid supplies
- Foot powder
- Disinfectant (Clorox) wipes

Appendix B: Important Contact Information

LCMS World Mission

1333 S. Kirkwood Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63122-7295
1-800-433-3954

www.lcmsworldmission.org/relief

Ken Reiner (LCMS-WM: Emergency Contact)

(314)996-1328 (work)
(636)256-9634 (home)
(314)753-1333 (emergency)

kenneth.reiner@lcms.org

Kurt Buchholz (LCMS-WM: 2nd Emergency Contact)

(314)996-1301 (work)
(636)326-7839 (home)

kurt.buchholz@lcms.org

Appendix C: Additional Resources

Web Sites:

HTH Travel Insurance (Emergency Evacuation Insurance)

This company offers emergency evacuation insurance through their Trip Protection plan. Cost varies according to participant's age. This insurance is important to have in case a medical emergency occurs while you are serving as a relief worker. Go to their Web site to purchase a policy by the month.

www.hthtravelinsurance.com/trip_protection.cfm

Center for Disease Control

Please use the CDC's webpage as a resource for how to stay healthy while serving as a relief worker. You can access relief worker specific information by going to the Web site below, and then selecting "Hurricane Disaster in the Southeast U.S."

www.cdc.gov/travel/namerica.htm

LCMS World Relief/Human Care

This webpage has up-to-date information on the relief effort of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod on its Hurricane Katrina Information Page. Much information is available about the ongoing efforts and what you and your church can do to help.

<http://worldrelief.lcms.org>

Districts of the LCMS

Each district page lists relief activities in or by that district and its congregations.

www.lcmsdistricts.org

Southern District of the LCMS

The Southern District of the LCMS includes Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and parts of the Florida panhandle. This webpage has the latest information from the district president and LCMS congregations in the area devastated by Hurricane Katrina.

www.lcmsdistricts.org/pages/default.asp?NavID=7010

Books:

Re-entry Guide for Short-Term Mission Leaders, by Lisa Espineli Chinn, (Deeper Roots)

To order, call: STEM Ministries at 1-877-783-6646.

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
What is Disaster Relief?	3
Emergency relief	3
Recovery	3
Long-term rebuilding	3
Qualities of a “Good” Relief Worker	4
Taking Care of Yourself	4
Safety Tips	5
Behavior Guidelines for Relief Workers	6
Responding with Love and Compassion	6
Signs of normal grief	7
Signs of complicated or unhealthy grief	7
Responding to the emotions of people affected by the disaster	7
Bridge-building behaviors	8
Things to expect	8
Teams	8
Team Structure	8
Team Leader	9
Devotion Leader	9
First-aid Coordinator	9
Debriefing	9
Team Debriefing	9
Individual Debriefing	9
Sharing Your Experience	10
District Assistance	10
Before You Go	10
Prayer Support	10
Prepare	10
Precautions	11
Paperwork	11
Conclusion	12
Appendix A: Packing Checklist	13
Appendix B: Important Contact Information	14
Appendix C: Additional Resources	15

Introduction

“We know what love is because Jesus gave His life for us. That's why we must give our lives for each other. If we have all we need and see one of our own people in need, we must have pity on that person, or else we cannot say we love God. Children, you show love for others by truly helping them, and not merely by talking about it.” (1 John 3: 16-18 CEV)

“Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.” (Mark 10: 43-45 NIV)

When disaster strikes, we have a responsibility to care for our neighbors whose lives have been directly impacted by tragedy. Amid all of the suffering and destruction, there is also an enormous **opportunity** to reach out and minister to the many immediate, physical needs, while at the same time sharing the love of Christ.

LCMS World Relief/Human Care and LCMS World Mission work together in partnership to carry out disaster relief. When a disaster occurs within the United States, these two agencies also work hand in hand with the districts to respond to the needs in the regions affected by the hurricane. When a disaster occurs outside the U.S., LCMS World Relief/Human Care and LCMS World Mission work together with our worldwide partners to respond to the need for disaster relief. These groups work together to determine specific needs and opportunities for service and begin to coordinate the relief effort.

During times of crisis, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has many individuals whose hearts are moved to help the people whose lives were affected by the hurricane. What an excellent occasion to work together with our brothers and sisters in Christ, sharing Christ's love with those who need to experience it firsthand!

This manual is especially intended for those districts, congregations, and teams that will be going to the areas devastated by a disaster and ministering to the needs of the people there. Thank you in advance for your service. Please use this manual as a resource to help you be most effective in your work. Let us know how we can help to support you. If you have questions, please contact a placement counselor at LCMS World Mission at 1-800-433-3954.

What is Disaster Relief?

Webster's dictionary defines disaster as: "a sudden calamitous event bringing great damage, loss, or destruction." Hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, and earthquakes each certainly qualify as disasters. The destruction wrought by these and other disasters call for a response. That response is known as **disaster relief** and consists of various phases.

Emergency relief is the immediate response to the disaster. Emergency relief usually begins within the first 24 to 48 hours and lasts up to six weeks. Emergency relief is usually initiated, coordinated, and carried out by agencies that specialize in this type of service. Professionals and trained volunteers typically serve in this capacity. Emergency relief often includes:

- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Supplying food and water
- ◆ Crisis counseling
- ◆ Emergency medical care
- ◆ Shelter
- ◆ Transportation

Recovery is an intermediate phase and follows emergency relief. This is the phase when utility companies work to get the electricity, water, gas, and telephones back online. Community leaders assess the damage, and develop strategies for rebuilding. People who live in the affected areas begin trying to get their lives back under control. Depending on the extent of the disaster, this phase can last anywhere from a week to a few months. Recovery includes many of the same activities as the emergency relief phase, though with less urgency, as well as:

- ◆ Clean-up
- ◆ Repairs
- ◆ Short-term financial assistance

Recovery is the phase in which relief work volunteers can begin to get involved. Teams that are totally self-sufficient (i.e. can provide their own housing, food, water, bathroom/shower facilities, equipment, etc.) can offer assistance to churches and neighborhoods during the clean-up.

During this phase, teams that are not fully self-sufficient **should wait** until there are services in place that can enable them to be a real help to the affected areas.

Churches, groups, and individuals that want to help during the recovery phase can do so by offering financial assistance to agencies that are carrying out relief work, such as LCMS World Relief/Human Care at <http://worldrelief.lcms.org>, or 1-888-930-4438. If they would like to send supplies, they should contact Orphan Grain Train at www.ogt.org or (402)371-7393.

Long-term rebuilding usually takes four months to two years or longer. People who were affected by the disaster go through a variety of emotions, from elation to despair to determination. The rebuilding phase involves reconstruction and major repair work, as well as long-term support needs for the people whose lives were radically changed by the disaster. This type of work can take place in the region where the disaster occurred, as well as in relocation areas for people who were displaced by the disaster.

Long-term rebuilding is the phase that will need the most volunteers. We have an excellent opportunity to reach out to the people whose lives were dramatically changed by a disaster. By serving as a volunteer on a relief work team, you can tangibly share the love Christ with these people. In many cases it is likely that your church's district will have the opportunity to reach out to a sister congregation(s) that was affected by the disaster. There will be opportunities to serve those congregations and their members, as well as a wealth of opportunities to serve the communities throughout areas that were affected by the disaster.

Qualities of a "Good" Relief Worker

Our Savior gives us the ideal example of being a servant. He came and lived among us, taking on our sorrows, and suffering with us. He put others' needs before His own needs. He had compassion on us. He is our Good Shepherd, who laid down His life for us. As a relief worker, you have the opportunity to be God's hands, serving the people whose lives have been impacted by a disaster. LCMS relief workers bring many different gifts and abilities to the relief effort. However, they should all share some qualities.

- ◆ Relief workers should have the fruit of the Spirit, especially: love, patience, kindness, gentleness, and self-control.
- ◆ Relief workers must follow the directions of those in charge.
- ◆ Relief workers must be flexible, flexible, flexible in every situation, before and during their service.
- ◆ Relief workers are called on the basis of skills that are needed and placed according to needs, talents, and availability.
- ◆ Relief workers should be prepared to use every opportunity to share the hope and joy that come from their faith in Christ.

Relief workers should be strong, both physically and in their faith. Doing disaster relief is hard work; the days are long and the work can be exhausting. Being in good physical condition is important. Doing disaster relief work is also draining spiritually; seeing so much destruction and suffering day after day depends on strong faith to be able to continue the work.

Relief Workers **DON'T**:

- ◆ expect to be the first called;
- ◆ expect to work with only your group;
- ◆ expect favors or preferential treatment;
- ◆ require everyone else to accommodate them;
- ◆ over-reach their limitations.

Taking Care of Yourself

Doing disaster relief work is very stressful. Relief workers *will experience* the effects of this stress in one form or another. It is important to monitor yourself so that you can deal with this stress in a healthy, effective way. You should keep track of how often you take a break; how long you work; what you are eating; your privacy needs; and your personal support system while

you are serving as a relief worker. Members of a relief team help each other monitor these things. By taking care of yourself, you will be better able to serve the needs of those affected by hurricane. You have the responsibility for your own personal preparation, motivation, attitude, assessment, and participation.

Safety Tips

Know your limits, and work within them. This includes your physical limitations (health, strength, and endurance); emotional health (stress management); and mental capacity (knowledge and skills).

Use the checklist at the end of this manual to make sure that you have the items you need to be properly equipped and to help maintain your comfort and mental health.

- ◆ Wear the proper clothing for the work you will be doing; this includes having the right footwear and proper safety equipment for the job at hand.
- ◆ Avoid sitting or standing in the same position for an extended period of time.
- ◆ Use sunscreen if you will be outdoors during much of the day.
- ◆ Drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration.
- ◆ Take frequent breaks, especially if you are working in the heat.
- ◆ Do NOT base your workload on that of another person.
- ◆ Pace yourself.
- ◆ Use caution when working in dangerous conditions (i.e. electric lines; broken glass or other debris; exposed or hidden nails; vehicle traffic, etc.).

It is strongly recommended that each team have a first-aid coordinator. Report all injuries to this person. If your team does not have a first-aid coordinator, as soon as you arrive at your site of service, your team leader should find out how to deal with any injuries that might occur. Keep a copy of your Emergency Information Reference Form handy while you are serving.

Here are a few thoughts to help guard the safety of relief workers:

- ◆ Before entering a building, make certain the structure has been examined for potential hazards and is safe to enter.
- ◆ Before entering damaged buildings, be sure that all utilities (electricity, gas, telephone, cable, etc.) have been turned off. Check with utility companies if necessary.
- ◆ Always assume downed electrical lines are energized until power companies notify you they have been turned off. Even then, use care around lines since they can become energized due to generators improperly used in homes. They may also become entangled in equipment or with your body.
- ◆ Wear appropriate safety equipment for the job at hand. Heavy-soled, steel-toed shoes, and gloves should be used in disaster areas. Hard hats are often needed.
- ◆ Bring flashlights or other lighting equipment for dark buildings.
- ◆ Power tools should be operated only by those with the proper training.
- ◆ When using chainsaws or power tools, always use safety equipment and never work alone.

- ◆ Do not enter flooded areas without probing the area to determine where there are holes or hidden objects.
- ◆ ONLY drink and use water that has been verified as safe.
- ◆ Make safety a priority.
- ◆ Consider taking a first-aid/CPR course before beginning your service.

Behavior Guidelines for Relief Workers

During challenging and stressful situations it can be easy to forget why you are serving and who you are representing. It is important to remember that you are God's ambassador, His hands and His voice. Your words and deeds should be a constant reflection of the love Christ has for each of the individuals whose lives have been impacted by a disaster. You have the opportunity to be a light shining in the darkness, a city on a hill, offering hope and comfort. Do not allow careless words or actions to diminish the work being done.

As you work to repair damaged buildings and construct new ones, remember that you are there to serve the people who were affected by the disaster. Listen to them. Let them tell you their stories if they want to. But also be prepared to refer them to someone who is trained to handle problems that are beyond your capabilities.

Respect the property of people who were affected by the disaster. Things that seem destroyed or damaged beyond repair may hold precious memories for someone.

Respect the privacy of every individual.

When taking pictures, whether of people or scenes of destruction, be sensitive to the feelings of the people involved. If they are present, always ask permission.

Before you give out information about available resources and aid, make certain that the information you have is correct. Also, when you talk with people about the overall disaster situation, make certain that your information is correct. Don't contribute to rumors.

Relief workers have the chance to act out their faith in a tangible way, and often that action will open the door to share that faith in words. Be prepared to share with people the reason you are serving: Jesus Christ and His love for all people.

Responding with Love and Compassion

Most of those affected by the disaster have experienced various levels of loss: loss of property, loss of keepsakes and memories, and/or loss of life. They will often be grieving. This is important and normal for them to work through; however, it is also important for you to recognize what is happening and how to respond.

Additionally, since you will be immersed into a very stressful, emotion-filled situation, you may begin to feel some of this grief as well. It is very important that you pay attention to feelings that you might have and talk with someone about them.

Signs of normal grief

Feelings might include: sadness, guilt, anxiety, loneliness, abandonment by God, emptiness, fatigue, helplessness, shock and disbelief, yearning for the way life used to be, relief that you and loved ones survived, numbness, and anger.

Physical reactions such as hollowness in the stomach, tightness in the chest and throat, oversensitivity to noise, feeling short of breath, weakness in the muscles, lack of energy, and dry mouth might occur.

You might experience *thoughts* of confusion, preoccupation, "I must be going crazy", and visual and auditory hallucinations.

Behaviors such as sleep disturbances (too much or too little), appetite disturbances (too much or too little), catching yourself wandering around, forgetting what you were doing, social withdrawal, restless over-activity, crying, suppressed crying, and dreaming about your trauma and loss are all normal.

Signs of complicated or unhealthy grief

These include:

- ◆ excluding friends, family, or activities;
- ◆ prolonged feelings of emptiness and the worthlessness of life;
- ◆ having thoughts of self-hurt or self-destruction;
- ◆ abuse of alcohol, prescription or illegal drugs.

These are all signals that the individual needs help from someone experienced in helping people through crisis and loss. You should refer these people to a trained professional, such as a pastor or counselor.

Responding to the emotions of people affected by the disaster

Many people whose lives were impacted by a disaster have had much of their independence and autonomy taken away from them. They often feel as though they are not being listened to. As a relief worker, you should try to communicate to people affected by the disaster that you are willing to listen to them share their feelings, and that you will take them seriously. You can do this verbally or non-verbally. Some of the non-verbal ways you can do this are tone of voice, eye contact, and a relaxed, attentive posture.

This sharing allows the beginning of a relationship to form and is the beginning of mutual trust and caring. You are building a bridge. This trust is essential for effective sharing of your faith; people need to know that you genuinely care about them as individuals. Basically, you need to earn the right to help these people as individuals. There will be many relief agencies in and out of their lives during the coming months. You need to show that you are not just there to tear down, repair, and construct buildings, but also to meet their needs, even if it is uncomfortable for you.

Bridge-building behaviors

- ◆ **Accepting:** Accept the fact that you cannot completely understand the people or what they have been through. This is just a beginning, so don't become too frustrated with yourself.
- ◆ **Being aware:** Be aware that at times you may feel your own prejudices. You may become frustrated with the way things are or the way people behave. Don't deny the feelings; own them. Only then can you begin to understand the reasons behind them. Why are you frustrated? Being aware will help you grow in understanding of the differences.
- ◆ **Listening:** Listen more than you talk.
- ◆ **Giving:** Give of yourself. Take the initiative to reach out to the people whose lives were changed by a disaster. We often tend to shy away from getting involved in people's personal lives. Take a risk and talk with people. Trust God to work through your words and actions.
- ◆ **Enjoying:** Enjoy the people and your time with them as much as possible. If you don't take yourself too seriously, you won't burn out as easily. Help create an environment where people can share their struggles and laugh at themselves.

Things to expect

- ◆ The schedule won't happen as planned.
- ◆ Your expectations won't all be met.
- ◆ You will feel frustration. Refuse to complain.
- ◆ You will be stretched, challenged, and changed.
- ◆ God **will** work in you and through you.

Teams

Relief workers who are part of a team have a great support system available to them. Take advantage of it! You and your teammates should meet together regularly for support throughout your relief efforts, as well as once you return home. By meeting together, you can support and help each other as you deal with the stressful and emotionally taxing situations you will encounter during your relief work.

Many of you will be on a team with other people that you know, perhaps from your congregation or school. However, some of you might join a team of people that you meet for the first time as you work together. If you and your teammates have just met, we encourage you to exchange contact information so you can keep in contact once your service is completed. After your return home, it will be helpful to be able to talk with the people that shared your experience, even if you don't live near each other. They know exactly what you went through, and you can be a listening ear for them as well.

Team Structure

Each relief team should have a few basic roles covered within their team. These roles will help keep your team organized, cohesive, supportive, and effective as you serve. Each role is

important. In a few cases, more than one role might be filled by the same person. This is not ideal. The work you are doing is stressful, challenging work. Your team will be most effective if you share the responsibilities, so one person is not burdened unnecessarily.

Team Leader

This individual is the main contact person for all of your team's logistics before you begin your service. They will work with your district as well as with LCMS World Mission to coordinate getting your team ready to serve. They are responsible for distributing paperwork that needs to be filled out, and for collecting it and returning it to the appropriate person.. The team leader should have a copy of each team member's Emergency Information Form and keep it handy throughout the trip. You should direct all of your questions about logistics to your team leader.

Devotion Leader

Teams should meet daily for devotions and prayer. One member of your team should be assigned the responsibility of coordinating this. That could mean that they lead the devotions and prayer time each day, or that they make up a schedule so each willing team member takes a turn leading the devotion and prayer time.

Your team will be given a devotional booklet by LCMS World Mission that will have Bible readings and devotions you can use each day, along with some questions for debriefing. This guide is useful so that your team can stay focused and encouraged in the midst of the destruction and hardship you will see.

First-aid Coordinator

We strongly recommend that each team have a first-aid coordinator. Report all injuries to this person. The first-aid coordinator is also responsible for determining how to deal with serious injuries or other health issues that might occur during your service. If your team does not have a specified first-aid coordinator, please make plans for how you will deal with injuries if they occur.

Debriefing

Team Debriefing

Emotionally, your relief work will be an experience few can understand unless they also serve as relief workers. You should meet daily with your teammates to debrief about the day's experiences. This sharing can help you process the different emotions, both positive and negative, that you experience as you are working each day. Questions for debriefing are available in the daily devotional booklet provided by LCMS World Mission.

Individual Debriefing

In order to remember all of the experiences you have during the relief work you do, you might consider keeping a journal. This will not only provide a record of your service once you return home, but will also give you the opportunity to do personal debriefing each day. You will have a chance to reflect and think about your experience as you jot down the things that have happened. You might also want to take pictures, to remember your experiences. However, please be

respectful of the people and places that you photograph. Ask permission before taking pictures when there are people present whose lives were changed by a disaster.

Sharing Your Experience

When you return home after your work is done, you will again need to debrief. Each person's "re-entry" into their home setting is different. You may return unchanged, but it is unlikely. More than likely you will return from this trip a different person with a different view. It is good for you to share your experiences with your family, friends, and church members.

People who did not go will be interested to hear about your experiences. Be prepared to tell your story, but recognize that they may not be interested in every detail. Prepare to talk about your personal experiences in a way that will best communicate the purpose of your trip. Be as visual as possible. Listeners will catch your passion.

District Assistance

Your team is also strongly encouraged to take advantage of your LCMS district's critical incident stress management resources. This is a service of your district, utilizing the skills of someone trained to work with people who have been through very stressful, crisis situations. Contact your district office to set up a time to meet with this counselor.

Before You Go

Before you begin your service, there are some important tasks that you should complete. Some of these are "just-in-case" precautions, and others are routine logistical steps. Each task is important.

Prayer Support

Before you depart for your service, involve your family, friends, and church members in the work you will be doing by enlisting their prayer support. Ask them to pray for you daily while you are serving, not only for your safety, but also for opportunities. Pray that God would use you and your team to touch people's lives with the love of Christ.

Prepare

Before you head out, you should determine exactly where you are going and how you will get there. This could be very simple, or it could turn out to be a greater challenge than you expect. Depending on where you are going, the normal roads that you would take to get to your destination might or might not be open. Try to plan a couple of alternate routes, in case the most direct route is not available.

If you are going to serve a congregation, talk with someone from that congregation before you head down, if possible. They might be able to share valuable information about the situation into which you are heading, as well as any special equipment you should bring.

Precautions

You should also be sure to read the information that the Center for Disease Control has posted about the disaster relief site you will be serving. You can find this information on their Web site at www.cdc.gov/travel. Please read this and take the appropriate precautions. This includes checking with your doctor to see if you need any recommended vaccinations.

Paperwork

Before you serve, there are several pieces of important paperwork that you should complete. These can all be found on the LCMS World Mission Web site at www.lcmsworldmission.org/relief. The first form that you should fill out is the Disaster Relief Volunteer Info form. You need to fill it out and then give it to your pastor for his approval. Once he has signed it, have it returned to LCMS World Mission at the address listed on the form.

You will also need to fill out the following forms:

- ◆ Risk Disclosure Consent Waiver Agreement
- ◆ Medical Insurance Verification form
- ◆ Emergency Information Reference form

Once you have filled out these forms, return them to your team leader. Your team leader should collect all of your team's forms, and return them to LCMS World Mission in one large packet.

Conclusion

The relief effort to help those affected by a disaster is monumental. We thank you for your willingness to help in this way. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod cares about the people who have been affected by disasters, and we pray that God would raise up workers for the task of volunteer service. It will not be an easy task, but we trust that God will be with us as we go about this work.

As you strive to accomplish the task that God gives you to do, remember to always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. (1 Peter 3:15) Our hope in Christ is something that we willingly and joyfully share, especially at a time like this. May God use each of us to reach many individuals who are hurting from this disaster, with the saving message of His Son.

Appendix A: Packing Checklist

Although each location and team may require different items to bring, you can use this checklist to begin your packing.

Devotional Materials

- Bible and devotionals

Identification

- Driver's license
- Phone numbers (family, primary care doctor, employer, church, emergency contact)
- A copy of your Emergency Information Reference form

Miscellaneous Items

- Money/traveler's checks/credit and/or debit card
- Phone card
- Notebook and pencils or pens
- Envelopes and stamps
- Umbrella
- Camera and film
- Spare batteries
- Flashlight

Clothing

- Work shoes
- Waterproof footwear
- Sneakers
- Rain suit or poncho
- Jacket and/or coat (depending on temperature)
- Jeans or work pants

Health and Hygiene

- Prescription medicine
- Non-prescription drugs: Ibuprofen, Acetaminophen, diarrhea cure, antacids, laxative, etc.
- Allergy medicine
- Sunscreen (15+)
- Soap
- Hand sanitizer
- Laundry detergent
- Deodorant
- Feminine needs
- Mouthwash

Insurance Information

- Health insurance card

- Hair dryer
- Bedding (air mattress, sleeping bag, sheets and covers, etc.)
- Pillow
- Towels and washcloths
- Watch and/or alarm clock
- Water bottle
- Non-perishable snacks
- Bottled drinking water

- Socks
- Shirts
- Underwear
- Sleepwear
- Work gloves
- Hat/bandanas
- Laundry bag

- Toothbrush, toothpaste, and dental floss
- Shampoo and conditioner
- Comb and brush
- Hair spray
- Chap stick
- Shaving cream
- Razor
- Insect spray
- Lotion
- First-aid supplies
- Foot powder
- Disinfectant (Clorox) wipes

Appendix B: Important Contact Information

LCMS World Mission

1333 S. Kirkwood Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63122-7295
1-800-433-3954

www.lcmsworldmission.org/relief

Ken Reiner (LCMS-WM: Emergency Contact)

(314)996-1328 (work)
(636)256-9634 (home)
(314)753-1333 (emergency)

kenneth.reiner@lcms.org

Kurt Buchholz (LCMS-WM: 2nd Emergency Contact)

(314)996-1301 (work)
(636)326-7839 (home)

kurt.buchholz@lcms.org

Appendix C: Additional Resources

Web Sites:

HTH Travel Insurance (Emergency Evacuation Insurance)

This company offers emergency evacuation insurance through their Trip Protection plan. Cost varies according to participant's age. This insurance is intended to help in the event that a medical emergency occurs while you are serving as a relief worker. Go to their Web site to purchase a policy by the month.

www.hthtravelinsurance.com/trip_protection.cfm

Center for Disease Control

Please use the CDC's webpage as a resource for how to stay healthy while serving as a relief worker. You can access relief worker specific information by going to the Web site below, and then selecting "Hurricane Disaster in the Southeast U.S."

www.cdc.gov/travel/namerica.htm

LCMS World Relief/Human Care

This webpage has up-to-date information on the relief effort of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod on its Hurricane Katrina Information Page. Much information is available about the ongoing efforts and what you and your church can do to help.

<http://worldrelief.lcms.org>

Districts of the LCMS

Each district page lists relief activities in or by that district and its congregations.

www.lcmsdistricts.org

Southern District of the LCMS

The Southern District of the LCMS includes Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and parts of the Florida panhandle. This webpage has the latest information from the district president and LCMS congregations in the area devastated by Hurricane Katrina.

www.lcmsdistricts.org/pages/default.asp?NavID=7010

Books:

Re-entry Guide for Short-Term Mission Leaders, by Lisa Espineli Chinn, (Deeper Roots)

To order, call: STEM Ministries at 1-877-783-6646.