



Thank you for making a decision to join the Austin Disaster Relief Network! Our goal is to thoroughly walk you through the process so you and your congregation can make a significant impact in helping others during a time of disaster. Please follow the following instructions to begin the process of joining our network and preparing your organization. We look forward to working with you and your organization soon.

Sincerely,

Daniel Geraci
Executive Director

1. ONLINE REGISTRATION FORM: The 1st step for your organization is to fill out our questionnaire online so that we will be able to better understand how your organization can be most effective in the network. On the homepage of www.adrntx.org, click on ***“Join the Network.”*** This will take you to our registration page. Please take 10 minutes to complete the online form before moving forward to the next step.

2. SELECT A DISASTER RELIEF COORDINATOR (DRC): If you have completed the 1st step by going online and filling out our questionnaire, you are ready to take the next step. This step is the most important step of all. It is finding a DRC to represent your organization and become the liaison between ADRN and your organization. Your organization’s DRC will need to be an individual that can work under pressure, have flexibility with their job and be able to work well with people. DRC’s will be trained by ADRN and the American Red Cross (ARC). Minimal training requirements are 2.5 hours with ADRN, 2.5 hours with ARC and 2-3 hours with an online FEMA NIMS training course. The primary job duties for your DRC within your organization are as follows:

1. Collect Data and Organize Vital Resources (i.e. church resources, facility availability)
2. Recruit and Coordinate Volunteer Training with ADRN
3. Implement ADRN Disaster Plan: ADRN will work with every DRC to help them implement a disaster plan to adopt evacuees.

Please look for the ***“DRC Job Description”*** within your Welcome Packet. This will give you additional information on the DRC’s job description, duties and responsibilities.

Once you have established a DRC within your organization, ADRN will work closely with your DRC and provide the proper training and DRC manual to proceed forward. Please read the following information on The ADRN Model and the Five Levels of Disaster Preparation to get a better idea of the kinds of activities your DRC will be involved with. This will help you and your organization understand the steps to take in order to implement the next level of disaster planning. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Daniel Geraci, Director of ADRN at 512-825-8211.

THE ADRN MODEL

The Austin Disaster Relief Networks goal is to prepare the Body of Christ to adopt every family and individual affected by disaster and provide for their physical, emotional and spiritual needs in a timely manner.

The ADRN plan is to divide greater Austin area into 12 sectors and prepare each of these sectors to respond within a matter of hours after a disaster strikes. Each sector will have two ADRN HUB coordinators who will organize and mobilize resources within the community of churches, ministries and businesses from the sector to effectively work together. Each organization will be placed into geographical sector, based on their physical location.

Each church, ministry or business participating in the network will be asked to assign a dedicated “disaster relief coordinator”, whom we call the DRC, that will act as a liaison between the organization and ADRN. ADRN’s HUB coordinator will primarily work with the DRCs within their geographical sector, who are responsible for collecting data, organizing vital resources, recruiting and coordinating volunteer training and implementing a disaster relief plan before a disaster strikes.

Each church that joins the network will be placed in one of four categories: extra large, large, medium or small. The size of the congregation will help us determine the number of families or evacuees to send into each church community in the event of a disaster.

Each ministry and business that joins the network will also be categorized in advance to help us determine the types of resources that will be available. Resources will be categorized as such: food, clothing, shelter, warehouse, transportation and furniture. Once the network is in place, our goal is to run disaster drills and test the infrastructure by utilizing the network to help the poor and needy within Greater Austin on an ongoing basis.

Here is how ADRN would respond to a disaster with a network already in place: As evacuees arrive in the Greater Austin area, they are first directed to public shelters in area schools and similar government facilities. These shelters will be jointly operated by the Local Government, Schools, the American Red Cross and ADRN. This is called the “First Wave Response Team.” After the first 3-5 days, a majority of school shelters will close their doors to resume normal business operations. At this point, evacuees will be redirected to the “Second Wave Response Team” and their intermediate church shelters. The Second Wave Response Team consist of local government, the American Red Cross and participating ADRN churches set up as intermediate shelters. All churches within our network, whether they are intermediate shelters or not, would still sponsor families based on their size, the number of evacuees coming into greater Austin, and the number of churches participating in the network.

Within every church or church shelter, the local congregation will provide for the immediate needs of every family they adopt, with the assistance of the American Red Cross and government entities involved. Any shortages the church or church shelter cannot provide will be met through the Austin Disaster Relief Network of resources, as well as national and global support.

ADRN believes there are three great points about our model:

1. The plan is simple
2. Every participating organization operates autonomously
3. The plan promotes unity within the Body of Christ

FIVE LEVELS OF DISASTER PREPARATION

The Austin Disaster Relief Network has five distinctive levels of disaster preparation in mind for the Greater Austin area. Each one is important but every level precedes the next in order of priority for our network and the disaster agencies we are closely working with.

DP Level 1 – Building the Infrastructure: The first level is the most important level. Without it in place, there is no foundation. Our first focus is to build the communication infrastructure by inviting participating churches, ministries and businesses to join the network. As soon as participating churches decide to join and fill out our online questionnaire, the next step is to help them identify and select a disaster relief coordinator (DRC) within their organization. Once the DRC has been determined, the communication line between the participating organization and ADRN has been established. From this point, ADRN will work closely with the DRC to organize and implement a disaster plan to adopt families affected by disaster and provide for a wide spectrum of their needs. Every DRC will meet with an ADRN representative in their geographical sector to walk through the DRC manual and help them organize the first steps to implementing a disaster plan within their organization.

DP Level 2 – Decisions, Direction and Action: The second level of disaster preparation focuses on laying the internal groundwork for the participating church, ministry or business. The organization's DRC is encouraged to inform leadership of their minimal required involvement within the network and opportunities to provide additional support. Once the options are discussed and decided upon, this will give the particular organization the direction they need to begin recruiting volunteers. Every church participating within the network will minimally be required to sponsor families affected by disaster based on the size of their congregation. Every ministry and business participating within the network will be minimally required to coordinate resources through the network in order to effectively and efficiently meet the needs of those affected by disaster. The following are additional areas of disaster relief support that are optional for a church.

Additional Opportunities for Churches:

1. *Do we want to adopt, staff and be trained to help manage one or more of the 88 public shelters within Greater Austin when disaster strikes?* The City of Austin and Surrounding Counties have invited ADRN participants to help manage and staff the 88 public shelters within Greater Austin. These shelters typically stay open for 3-5 days. If a church decides to adopt a shelter, they will be connected with the public shelter closest in proximity to their church and will be expected to provide volunteers and some supplies for the evacuees, as needed. The appointed Disaster Relief Coordinator for a participating church will be trained to organize the efforts required to adopt a public shelter.
2. *In the event of a catastrophic disaster, do we want to open our facility to evacuees? If so, how much space? Where?* ADRN is looking for churches to provide intermediate shelter space for evacuees after the public shelters close to resume business. The church DRC will be trained to organize and prepare congregation to become a shelter. The general time frame for an intermediate church shelter to be open is one to four weeks.
3. *What resources, besides volunteers can our church provide in the event of a disaster?* Churches may provide whatever resources they have that can assist a family affected by disaster (i.e. food, clothing, transportation, used furniture, personal supplies)

DP Level 3 – Recruiting and Training Volunteers: The third level of disaster preparation focuses on recruiting volunteers to help build an internal infrastructure within the organization to implement a disaster plan. It is also involves identifying volunteer talents and facilitating volunteer training sessions with ADRN. ADRN will work closely with every DRC to help recruit volunteers by providing written and video communication tools. The ADRN website will also provide information and necessary tools to recruit volunteers. All training will be provided by the City of Austin and the American Red Cross. Shelter Manager training will take place in July and August 09'. These volunteers will be trained through the Capital Area Shelter Hub Plan (CASHP) system. Minimal training requirements will be 8 hours. Shelter volunteers will be trained by the American Red Cross. Minimal training requirements will be 2.5 hours. All volunteers are required to have a background check administered by the American Red Cross.

DP Level 4 – Implementing Your Disaster Plan: The fourth level of disaster preparation focuses on implementing the participating organizations disaster plan to effectively meet the emotional, physical and spiritual needs of those affected by disaster. Once the organization has identified and trained volunteers, it is time to put the plan into action. This entails an organization's DRC to coordinate with ADRN to develop an operation plan to receive evacuees in the time of disaster. Initially, volunteers will interact with evacuees within public shelters. After 3-5 days, evacuees will be moved to church shelters. At this point, volunteers will continue to remain engaged with their assigned evacuees to ensure their immediate needs are met, whether they are placed within their own church facility or another facility. After a period of time, many families will be able to return home but unfortunately some will not. It is at that point that the volunteers will take a more active role in working with their assigned evacuee families in helping them to rebuild their lives. The evacuees will require assistance as they transition from a public or church shelter into other temporary housing such as apartments or hotels.

DP Level 5 – Preparing Your Organization for Disaster: The fifth level of disaster preparation focuses on preparing the participating organization, staff and/or congregation for disaster. Our spiritual and physical preparedness are needed before we can adequately reach out to help others. Every DRC will be provided with a Disaster Preparation manual in order to effectively prepare their organization before the next disaster strikes.

ADRN Timeline

The success of this plan requires that the network be fully implemented before 2009 hurricane season. By the end of August, our goal is to have 150 churches on the network with at least 2,000 volunteers and 100 shelter managers trained. By late August, ADRN will conduct disaster drills to test the infrastructure.



DISASTER RELIEF COORDINATOR

Job Description

The Disaster Relief Coordinator (DRC) provides leadership, direction, and services within their participating organization under the direction and guidance of the Austin Disaster Relief Network HUB Coordinator. The DRC is responsible for recruiting volunteers and collecting resource information. In the event of a disaster or disaster drill, the DRC coordinates and directs supplies and personnel to appropriate locations for their organization. The DRC provides leadership and support to disaster preparedness activities including planning, training, coordination and development of volunteers. Supervisory responsibilities include interviewing and evaluating volunteers; planning, assigning, and directing volunteer work; addressing volunteer concerns and problem resolution.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

- Recruits volunteers and collects resource information.
- Serves as a facilitator and supervisor of volunteers. Keeps current records on volunteers.
- Assists with facilitating basic, intermediate and advance level disaster training for volunteer staff.
- Works in close relationship with HUB Coordinator to plan, coordinate and supervise the volunteer activities of disaster personnel and equipment for ADRN disaster operations.
- Must be prepared to respond to disaster when deemed necessary by ADRN.
- Maintains relationships and communications with facilities that can serve as potential service delivery sites (i.e. shelter, warehouses, etc)
- Facilitates information sharing with community groups regarding the American Red Cross and ADRN disaster responsibilities, preparedness and other activities.
- Tracks emergency supplies, resources, volunteers and available shelter space.
- Must have flexible schedule and be willing to work long periods of time in the event of a disaster.
- Minimal training requirements are 2.5 hours with ADRN, 2.5 hours with the American Red Cross and 2-3 hours with an online FEMA NIMS training course (The course is free, please visit: <http://emilms.fema.gov/ICS100G/index.htm>).



FAQs: Adopting a Public Shelter

How many volunteers will the church need to provide for one shelter?

As many as possible. Each public shelter requires a minimum of 4 shelter managers, 12 volunteer staff and (if possible) one nurse. Every volunteer is expected to work a minimum of a 6-12 hour shift, depending on the final number of volunteers assigned to the public shelter. An evening shift nurse may not be required.

What kind of shelter can the church adopt?

A School or Civic Center located closest to their facility.

What type of supplies will be provided by the church versus the Red Cross?

In all public shelters, the American Red Cross and facility operator will provide facility maintenance, security, food, some cots for special needs evacuees, and some emergency supplies. The church is asked to provide resources as needed, such as gas cards, bus tickets and other personal items.

Will transportation of evacuees be required?

In most cases, the evacuees will come in their own vehicles or be transferred by buses. If they need to visit a grocery store or pharmacy, bus vouchers will be provided by the American Red Cross or a ride can be offered by a volunteer.

What kind of training is required by the City of Austin, Surrounding Counties and the American Red Cross? Are background checks mandatory for all volunteers?

Every Shelter Manager is required to take 8 hours of the Capital Area Shelter Hub training along with a background check. Every volunteer is required to receive a minimum of 2.5 hours of training along with a background check.

Will volunteers need to be specialized in order to help the handicapped?

If volunteers have special skills to help assist the handicapped or special needs evacuees, they will be identified prior to a disaster strike.

Will security be provided by the local government or the American Red Cross?

The local government will provide security for all public shelters at all times.

Will the volunteers have special badges?

All Red Cross trained volunteers will be offered special badges that will enable them to get into a disaster area or facility.

Can a certified American Red Cross volunteer be sued?

No. All American Red Cross certified volunteers are protected under the American Red Cross liability insurance umbrella.



FAQs: Becoming an Intermediate Church Shelter

How many evacuees will an intermediate-size church shelter receive? *The number of evacuee families will be determined based on the size of the church, the number of evacuees and how many churches are participating within the network.*

How long will the church be required to be a shelter? *The intermediate church shelter may hold evacuees from 1 to 4 weeks, but at the discretion of the church.*

What supplies will the church need to provide? *The church will be required to provide immediate resources as needed, such as bus tickets, gas cards and other personal supplies. Some cots will be provided by the American Red Cross for special needs evacuees. Some churches may want to provide additional cots or bedding supplies as needed.*

Will the church be required to pay for extra garbage collection? *Yes*

Will the church be required to pay for extra custodian services? *Yes*

Will you have prearranged caregivers for pets? *Yes, portable Canine units will come from the animal shelters. Typically these are set up outside of the facility.*

If the church needs extra volunteers, will they be provided from other churches? *Yes*

Will there be legal protection for the church? *Every intermediate church shelter will be required to have their shelter manager volunteers trained and certified through the American Red Cross 8 hour training program. The shelter facility will also be inspected and approved by the American Red Cross in order to be protected under their liability insurance umbrella.*

Will the church need to store food, clothing and supplies? *No, it is not required. It is up to every participating church whether they decide to store food, clothing or supplies.*

Will the church need to provide maps to drug stores, grocery stores or laundry facilities? *Yes. It is recommended to have in advance, maps to drug stores, grocery stores, laundry mats, and local YMCA or fitness facilities with showers. If your facility does not have showers and you work out a deal with a local fitness facility to use their showers, the American Red Cross (ARC) will create a contract with this organization to have their facility inspected and approved prior to using the facility. This ARC agreement will ultimately cover all liabilities for their facility.*

Will the church need to perform background checks on the evacuees? *No. Sexual predators are required to identify themselves up front. Once identified, they will be moved to a local hotel.*

Who will provide documents to process the evacuees and volunteers? *The American Red Cross will provide all documents to process the evacuees and ADRN will provide all the necessary documents to process volunteers.*

Will the church need generators? *It is not required of a church to provide a generator but it will not be discouraged if a church shelter purchases a generator for backup purposes.*

Who will provide security for the church? *The American Red Cross will provide security for all intermediate church shelters, if necessary.*