

# Serve Montana

## VOLUNTEER RECEPTION CENTER SIMULATION

### Managing Spontaneous Volunteers in Times of Disaster



**servemontana**  
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICE  
[serve.mt.gov](http://serve.mt.gov)



## VRC: Volunteer Reception Center

The aim is to affiliate spontaneous volunteers with requesting agencies.

# Volunteer Reception Center (VRC)

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A VRC registers, screens and places **spontaneous volunteers** in available opportunities in times of disaster.

The aim is to affiliate spontaneous volunteers with requesting agencies. This is done by **registering** and **interviewing** potential volunteers, **assigning** them to a volunteer opportunity that meets their needs and skills (providing safety/job **training** as necessary) and **issuing** volunteer ID markings.

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## Volunteer Reception Center (VRC)

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VRCs are typically **established by local Volunteer Centers** or other voluntary agencies.

**Extensive planning is required** to identify possible locations and staff, likely volunteer roles at requesting agencies and developing Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) between the many stakeholders, in advance.

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## Volunteer Reception Center (VRC)

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**The decision to set up a VRC should be made by the local or state government** and is carried out by the organization previously identified as responsible for VRCs.

Individuals and organizations should **NOT** self-deploy and make an independent decision to establish VRCs.

# Four Phases of Disaster

Activities that prevent, eliminate or reduce the effects of a disaster

## Mitigation



Planning how to respond to a disasters and increasing resources available to respond effectively

## Preparedness



## Recovery

Restores vital life support systems and returns area to normal or near-normal conditions



## Response

Activities to provide emergency assistance to victims of the event and reduce the likelihood of secondary damage

# Disaster Terminology

- **Hazard:**
  - Source of potential harm
  - Defined by 3 types: natural, technological, terrorism
- **Emergency:**
  - Onset of hazard, which happens every day in every community
- **Disaster:**
  - A large magnitude emergency that exceeds the resources of the local community
- **Risk:**
  - Likelihood of hazard combined with consequences
- **Vulnerability:**
  - Propensity for damage from a disaster

# National Service in Times of Disaster

National Service programs play a **vital role** in their communities, and **this continues during disasters.**

**When the needs of the community change due to a disaster, the role of National Service members may also have to change.**



# National Service in Times of Disaster

- National Service programs have played a role in all four phases of disasters (Preparation, Mitigation, Response and Recovery), but are not first responders and do not work on the ‘front-line’ of disasters.



- Members **never** self-deploy, but wait to be called when and where they can most effectively be used and supported.



## Disaster Volunteers:

Volunteers play an important role in disasters.

# Disaster Volunteers

- Volunteers are a valuable resource when they are trained, assigned and supervised
- There is economic and logistical value in working with volunteers in times of disaster
- Ideally volunteers are affiliated beforehand, but during disasters many people volunteer for the first time

# Disaster Volunteers (continued)

- SUVs = Spontaneous Unaffiliated Volunteers
- Volunteers need to be flexible, self-sufficient, and aware of risks
- Information is vital to successful management of unaffiliated volunteers

# Who converges?

People converge at disaster sites for different reasons:

- Helpers
- Returnees
- The Anxious
- The Curious
- Fans or Supporters
- Exploiters

# Helping in Times of Disaster

**C**ash - Financial gifts get help to people fast.

Find reputable organizations at [nvoad.org](http://nvoad.org)

**A**sk before collecting items that may not be needed.

**R**espond by volunteering with a local relief agency.

**E**veryone can help. Go to a local volunteer center.

Find volunteer centers at [www.pointsoflight.org/centers/find\\_center.cfm](http://www.pointsoflight.org/centers/find_center.cfm)

Disaster **Volunteers** are **Priceless**

- but -

Disaster **Victims** are our **Purpose**

# Volunteer Reception Center

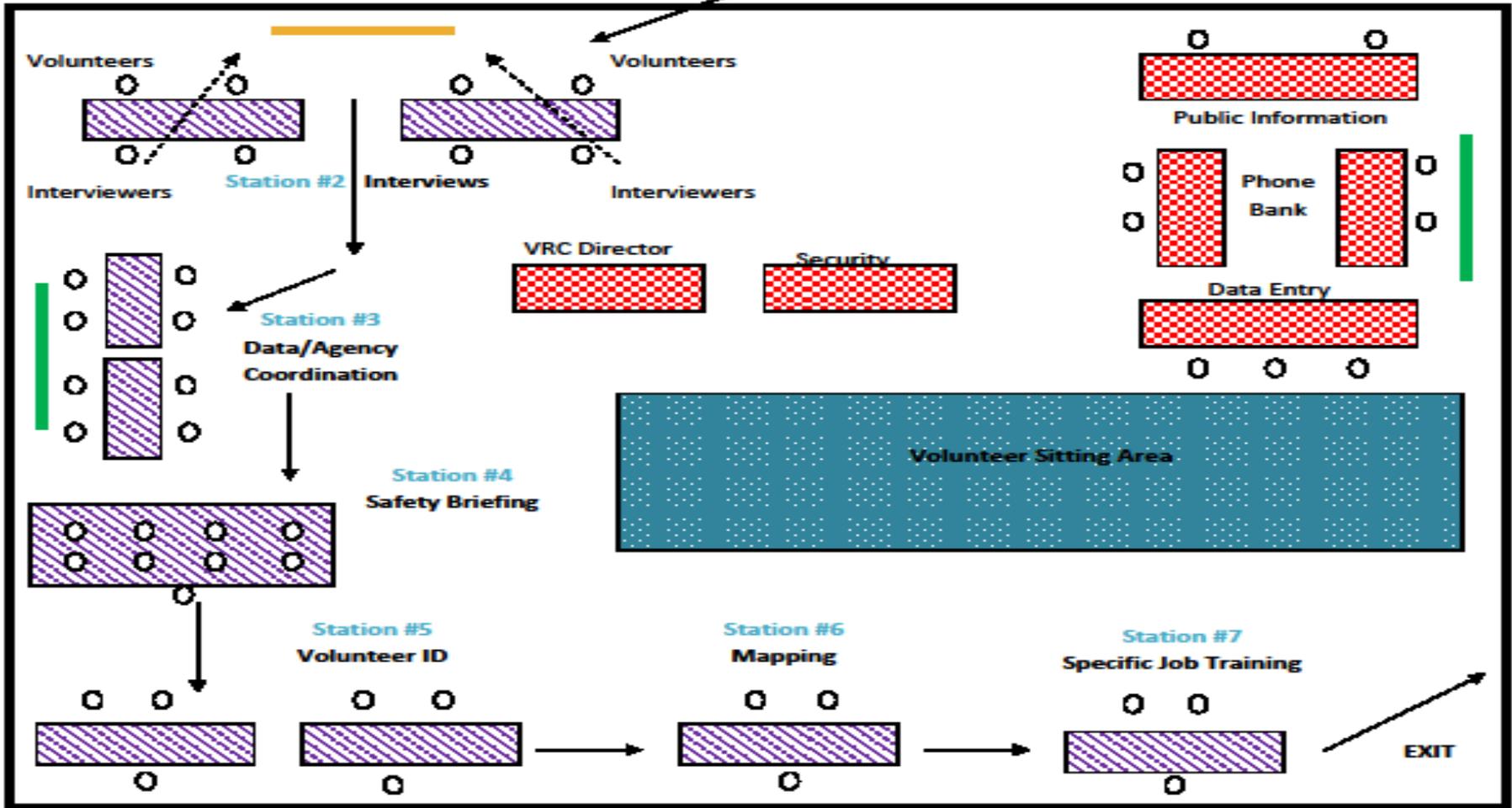


**Exercise**

# Volunteer Reception Center Floor Plan



Station #1 Registration/ Orientation



EXIT