



**City of Port St Lucie**  
**Office of Emergency Management**  
**SOG #13 Volunteers and Donations**  
**Management During a Disaster**



## Purpose, Intent and Effective Term:

The intent of this SOG is to define a process for the accepting, distributing, managing, and tracking of volunteer hours and donations before and after a disaster has occurred in the City of Port St. Lucie (“City”). This SOG shall commence upon the City and United Way of St. Lucie and Okeechobee Inc (“United Way”) executing a memorandum of understanding.

## Background:

After a disaster has occurred, it is quite common for people to want to offer help. Some do this through direct donations to organizations who do disaster relief work nationwide (i.e., American Red Cross, Salvation Army, World Central Kitchen, etc.) and others want to give of their time (volunteer) or money (donations) to those impacted. Some also want to donate items that they have collected for the benefit of those who have lost everything. This influx of volunteers and donations can create a large mission that can easily get out of control.

FEMA recognizes the worth of volunteers who are assisting before and after a disaster (preparations and response/recovery) by having an allowable rate (currently \$34.79/hr., adjusted annually and announced by Volunteer Florida in Tallahassee) in which a jurisdiction can use the value of volunteer work as a contribution towards the jurisdictional match the City would typically owe for response and recovery funding provided by FEMA (typically a 75% / 25% split, in which the State typically picks up 12.5% and the City picks up 12.5%). Therefore, ensuring that hours volunteered by those in the community pre- and post-disaster are tracked properly is paramount to reducing the cost to the city when seeking FEMA grants or reimbursements related to any given disaster impacting the city.

This SOG is the culmination of the work of the Volunteer & Donations Unit and Human Services Branch Director within the City’s Emergency Operations Center (“EOC”) to reach out to the United Way to provide oversight to the multiple not-for-profits, houses of worship and other non-governmental organizations (“NGO’s”) that aid the community in times of need.

## Guidelines:

### **Volunteers and Donations Collections/Referrals**

The United Way has agreed to be the clearinghouse for the city for donations in the event of a disaster. They will set up a donation portal on their website which accepts monetary donations and donations of goods and services.



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### **Coordination Process**

When a disaster is impending, the city commonly receives calls for assistance from residents prior to (in the event of a hurricane or other tropical activities) the storm requesting various things such as shuttering homes and other preparedness requests (typically for those who physically cannot do so). When this occurs, the city refers those calls to the United Way, who in turn refers the requests to local NGOs who provide these services free of charge to those in need. In the event non-profits are requested to assist residents' pre-disaster, the EOC's Human Services Branch and Volunteer & Donations Unit will track volunteer hours by providing the United Way volunteer logs (attachment A) and request return of these logs during the time the EOC is activated and they are serving in their EOC roles.

Post-disaster, the Volunteer & Donations Unit (part of the Human Services Branch in the EOC) is responsible for routing task requests for volunteers and organizing/coordinating donations given to the city in the furtherance of helping our residents recover. The Volunteer & Donations Unit will coordinate any incoming volunteer aid (*i.e.*, Cajun Navy, World Central Kitchen, any other non-profit coming to the city to assist) with the United Way, where volunteers will be given task assignments as needed/requested from the general population. United Way will also work with the EOC's Volunteer & Donations Unit to determine locations within the city which may need the most assistance, so that they can direct other non-profits to those locations to assist. United Way will work with these non-profits to complete the volunteer log (discussed in the next paragraph) and retrieve it from them throughout the duration of their service to the community, so that it can be captured by the city for in-kind donation purposes.

United Way will also set up a portal on their webpage at (<https://www.uwslo.org/>) for those wishing to make cash donations. The Short-Term Recovery Working Group Steering Committee will recommend recipients for the cash donations to the United Way. The Short-Term Recovery Working Group Steering Committee will be comprised of the City's Directors from the following departments: Emergency Management, Neighborhood Services, and Finance (written designees may serve in a director's stead); the Director of United Way; and the Director of each of three agencies United Way oversees or their designated alternates. United Way will have final authority on the dissemination of monetary, service or goods donations.

The Short-Term Recovery Working Group is a group of volunteer organizations, houses of worship and other 501(c)(3) organizations located in or adjacent to the City. The Short-Term Recovery Working Group will be tasked with identifying the capabilities these organizations can provide during a disaster and coordinating the implementation of these capabilities. The Short-Term Recovery Working Group will be co-facilitated by representatives from the City's Division of Emergency Management, the City's Department of Neighborhood Services, and the United Way. When the EOC is activated, this Group will work under the guidance of the United Way.



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**Volunteer Log Sheet**

When volunteers are used in the furtherance of assisting citizens during a disaster (such as a hurricane) or post-disaster (hurricanes, wildfires, etc.), each non-profit organization should use the attached Volunteer Log Sheet (Attachment A) to log the hours each volunteer spends each day performing these services. It is integral that the log be filled out completely each time a volunteer checks in or checks out from performing disaster-related work on a volunteer basis for a non-profit organization. The non-profit organization contact will be provided with these forms, with the instruction sheet by the United Way (via the EOC’s Volunteer and Donations Unit) prior to any of their volunteers beginning work within the city. These sheets should be duplicated and kept separate for each day of work being done by the non-profit organization (as it will have to be organized by date for reimbursement purposes).

At times determined by the EOC’s Volunteer and Donations Unit and United Way, Volunteer Log Sheets will be picked up by each non-profit organization and returned to EOC Volunteer and Donations Unit staff. Those sheets will be used in calculating in-kind contributions of volunteers to the disaster. Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster Unit staff will scan the Volunteer Log Sheets to be kept as back-up documentation to their drive located at H:\Emergency Management\Volunteers & Donations – Social Service\Scanned In-kind Hour Log and keep the original. They should also store a copy in the Teams Emergency Operations Center group under their unit.

**Calculations**

The EOC’S Volunteer and Donations Unit will then calculate the total in-kind hours per organization (per day) and document same in H:\EmergencyManagement\Volunteers&Donations – Social Service\Total In-kind Hours Tracking and in the Teams Emergency Operations Center group under their unit.

Finally, after calculating the hours per organization per day, they will submit the total in-kind hours to the Senior Accountant in the City’s Finance Department (who applies for FEMA reimbursement) and the Finance Section Chief in the EOC (to have up-to-date information on volunteer work taking place within the city).



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**Approved by:**

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City Manager, City of Port St Lucie

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Emergency Management Division Director



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# Attachment 1: Volunteer Log & Instructions





## **Volunteer Log Instructions**

The City of Port St. Lucie would like to thank you and your organization for volunteering your time to our community in our time of need. The attached Volunteer Log is integral to the City's tracking of the hours volunteered by those in the City both pre- and post-disaster, which are in turn used to reduce the cost to the City when seeking FEMA grants or reimbursements related to a disaster. Please ensure that all the information requested in the Volunteer Log is included and accurately reflects the work performed by each individual volunteer. Please email all volunteer logs to the Volunteer and Donations Unit of the City's Emergency Operations Center at [mendys@cityofpsl.com](mailto:mendys@cityofpsl.com) & [bgomez@cityofpsl.com](mailto:bgomez@cityofpsl.com) at the end of each day. If additional Volunteer Logs are needed, please reach out to the United Way's volunteer liaison. Thank you once again for your contribution to our City's recovery efforts.

### **Organization Name**

Please enter the name of the organization being represented (Name of Non-Profit organization or religious organization)

### **Name of Volunteer**

Please enter the name of each individual volunteer (1 line per volunteer per shift/day worked)

### **Type of Work Performed**

This is very important, as FEMA requires a description of the work performed. One-word answers will be rejected by FEMA. If you are shuttering homes before a storm for the elderly or those with physical disabilities, then enter "shuttering homes for elderly and disabled prior to storm making landfall". "Shuttering" would not be enough in this situation.

### **Check-In Time**

Please enter the start time for your volunteer work

### **Check-Out Time**

Please enter the end time for your volunteer work

### **Location**

It is important to document locations where work was performed. A street address "123 Anywhere Street" or multiple addresses would be acceptable. If you are doing one type of work only that shift/day, you could put something like "various locations throughout the City of Port St. Lucie", and your organization should keep a separate log of all the locations that work was done (as they would probably want to go back and assist after the storm passed).

### **Date**

Enter the date that you are working as a non-profit volunteer within the City of Port St. Lucie.