Disaster Social Services
Participant Guide
National Disaster Training Program
The Salvation Army
Emergency Disaster Services
National Disaster Training Program

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Introduction

Welcome to the *Disaster Social Services* course!

This course is designed for supervisors working within the disaster social services function. The course will examine the role of disaster social services within a disaster operation, including its position within the Incident Command System (ICS) and connections with other disaster relief providers in the larger sequence of service delivery. Participants will learn five essential steps to setting up a disaster social services program and apply that knowledge in a table-top exercise that simulates setting up a Salvation Army Disaster Assistance Center (DAC). The course will conclude with an introduction to long-term recovery and an exercise that simulates participation in a long-term recovery / unmet needs committee.

This training class is part of The Salvation Army’s National Disaster Training Program, whose overall purpose is to help prepare you to better serve others during an emergency as a trained Salvation Army disaster worker.

Who Should Take This Course

This course is designed for experienced disaster workers with a social services background who will serve in supervisory positions on a disaster operation. Participants should be familiar with the material present in the Emergency Assistance in Disaster Operations course as many of the concepts introduced in that class will be advanced in this training.

About The National Disaster Training Program

The development of The Salvation Army’s disaster training program began in June 2002 when the organization received a three-year grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. for the development and initial implementation of a U.S. training program.

The National Disaster Training Program (NDTP) is a standardized curriculum available to any Salvation Army disaster worker, including officers, staff and local volunteers, as well as to other faith-based and secular organizations. The goal of the NDTP is to develop the skills of disaster responders and better prepare non-governmental organizations to respond to emergencies in the most prompt, efficient and effective manner possible.
Introduction

Disaster Social Services
Key Points

The intent of this unit is to introduce you to the course and set expectations for the day’s training. This will include:

• Housekeeping details
• Getting to know each other
• Devotional
• Summarizing course goals
• Reviewing the course schedule.

*Photo by The Salvation Army.*
Key Points

- Please sign the Course Registration form. Participants who do not, may not receive credit for taking the course or be issued a certificate.

- When filling out the registration form, legibly PRINT your name (as you wish it to appear on your certificate) and address (where you want your certificate sent).

- Every participant should have a Participant Manual.

- Every participant should have a Participant Evaluation form. As the class is taught, participants should fill out the form and remember to turn it in to the trainer at the end of the course. This form will help the trainers judge their performance and assist the course designers in assessing the overall quality of the training material.

- When filling out the participant evaluation, do not hesitate to include feedback on any aspect of the course or materials, even if that area is not specifically mentioned on the standardized evaluation form.

Photo by Microsoft™ Office Online.
Famous Duos!

- Each person will be given a card.
- Participants will then work their way around the room trying to find the person (or persons) holding a card with an item “complimenting” their own.
- Be prepared to introduce your new partner(s).
Exercise:

In your groups, discuss:

- The Salvation Army is a Christian church with a social service mission.
- What are the advantages of an organization with a spiritual mission providing disaster social services?
- Are there drawbacks?
- Be prepared to share your answers.

Photo by The Salvation Army.
Deuteronomy 15: 7-11

When you happen on someone who's in trouble or needs help among your people … don’t look the other way pretending you don’t see him. Don’t keep a tight grip on your purse. No. Look at him, open your purse, lend whatever and as much as he needs. Don’t count the cost. Don’t listen to that selfish voice ….. and turn aside and leave your needy neighbor in the lurch, refusing to help him. He’ll call God’s attention to you and your blatant sin. Give freely and spontaneously. Don’t have a stingy heart. The way you handle matters like this triggers God, your God’s, blessing in everything you do, all your work and ventures.

There are always going to be poor and needy people among you. So I command you: Always be generous, open purse and hands, give to your neighbors in trouble, your poor and hurting neighbors.

- Excerpted from The Message
Emergency in Disaster Operations

Key Points

This course is designed for individuals who will supervise disaster social service programs. Participants who complete this course will be able to develop a disaster social services program during an incident or supervise casework specialists within, for example, a Disaster Assistance Center. Participants will also understand how The Salvation Army’s disaster social services program fits into a larger multi-agency sequence of service delivery and how to successful transition from the emergency response phase of an incident to long-term recovery.

The course objectives (which will be reviewed again at the end of the class) describe specific things the participants should be able to do after completing the training.

- Identify the ICS function that includes disaster social services and key positions within that function
- Describe the disaster declaration process and FEMA Individual Assistance programs
- Identify the five steps in developing a disaster social services program and perform these actions on a disaster
- Set-up and supervise a Disaster Assistance Center
- Describe the transition process between emergency assistance and long-term recovery
- Identify the role of Long Term Recovery or Unmet Needs Committees.

*Photo by Microsoft™ Office Online.*
This course is divided into five units with an introduction and conclusion:

**Introduction**

**Unit 1:** Disaster Social Services and the Incident Command System

**Unit 2:** Disaster Declarations and Sequence of Service Delivery

**Unit 3:** Managing a Disaster Social Services Program

**Unit 4:** The Disaster Assistance Center

**Unit 5:** Transitioning to Long-term Recovery

**Conclusion**

*Photo by Microsoft™ Office Online.*
Any Questions?
Unit One

Disaster Social Services and the Incident Command System
Key Points

This unit will offer a definition of disaster social services and describe how disaster social services fit within the Incident Command System and the Operations function. The unit will also describe key positions within disaster social services and depict the command structure for incidents of varying sizes.

*Photo by FEMA.*
Exercise: What Is A Disaster?

1. In your small groups, consider the question “What is a disaster?”
2. Then read the definition provided in the Participant Manual.
3. Is this a good definition? What strikes you as particularly important about this definition?
Key Points

Regardless of the size of a disaster, emergency responders (including government, corporate, and charitable organizations) utilize a common management structure to command and control disaster operations.

This common management structure is called the **Incident Command System (ICS)**. ICS is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazard incident management concept. ICS is a management tool used to command, control and coordinate emergency operations; effective regardless of the size, type, or complexity of the incident; and used by government agencies, volunteer organizations and the private sector.

*Photo by FEMA.*
ICS is organized into functional areas called sections. Each section represents an activity (or group of related activities) that are considered essential parts of every successful incident response operation.

A standard Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT) includes the following sections:

**Incident Command** - The Incident Command section is always the first ICS section established in a disaster relief operation. The Incident Command section is represented by the Incident Commander, who acts as the onsite manager of the incident management assistance team and is responsible for coordinating all emergency services and support operations. In addition to supervising the incident command team, the Incident Commander must also set incident and service delivery objectives, monitor and approve financial expenditures, assess the physical and emotional well-being of staff, and ensure that all aspects of the disaster relief operation reflect the mission and principles of The Salvation Army. The Incident Commander also performs all major ICS responsibilities unless those functions are specifically delegated and assigned to subordinates. This prevents issues from “falling through the cracks” during an operation and helps maintain accountability within the ICS structure.

**Public Information** – This section is responsible for collecting and disseminating information about the disaster operation to both internal and external audiences. These audiences include the media; disaster survivors (who need specific information how and where to access Salvation Army assistance programs); in-kind and financial donors; and Salvation Army personnel at corps, headquarters, and other Salvation Army facilities throughout the world. This section is supervised by a Public Information Officer (PIO).

**Liaison** – This section is responsible for acting as The Salvation Army’s point of contact with other disaster relief organizations and representing The Salvation Army within multi-agency coordination centers, such as Emergency Operations Center (EOC) or Joint...
Field Office (JFO). The Liaison Officer is also The Salvation Army’s representative and point of contact for other disaster relief groups, including government agencies and community and volunteer organizations. The section is supervised by a Liaison Officer, who must be able to build strong partnerships with representatives from other agencies within the limits of his authority.

Safety – This section is responsible for ensuring the safety and security of all disaster personnel. Supervised by a Safety Officer, the safety section is responsible for ensuring, as much as possible, that disaster workers and those served are not carelessly hurt or injured. The Safety Officer is authorized to review all aspects of the disaster relief operation, including direct service programs, equipment, facilities, and personnel practices, to determine possible hazards during both on and off-duty hours.

Emotional and Spiritual Care – This section attends to the emotional and spiritual care needs of disaster workers and survivors. The Emotional and Spiritual Care section includes external care for disaster victims, rescue workers, and the general public, as well as internal care for Salvation Army officers, employees, and volunteers. These services may include prayer support and intervention with individuals or groups, private or public memorial services, or defusing or debriefing meetings with internal or external personnel. The section is supervised by an Emotional and Spiritual Care Officer and is unique to The Salvation Army, though some other organizations are now recognizing the need for a chaplaincy and/or mental health function within their overall command structure. Proselytizing is not appropriate at disaster sites and is not permitted by Salvation Army caregivers.

Operations – This section manages all direct service activities, such as mass feeding and emergency assistance programs and is supervised by an Operations Chief. The section may also be responsible for supervising certain facilities, such as a distribution or service center, where disaster victims receive direct services. In consultation with the Policy Group, the Incident Commander may add additional direct services, such as cleanup or rebuilding teams, to meet the unique needs of a particular disaster relief operation. The Operations section would also manage these new disaster services.

Logistics – This section secures and manages the resources, supplies, and equipment necessary to support the disaster operation. These critical assets may include vehicles, supplies, in-kind donations and facilities. In addition, the logistics section coordinates and supervises specialized support personnel in areas such as communications; information technology; transportation; warehousing; and vehicle and facility maintenance. This section is supervised by a Logistics Chief.

Finance & Administration – This section manages reports and statistics, personnel and volunteers, and accounting for the operation. The section is supervised by a Finance & Administration Chief. In addition to the other responsibilities already listed, the Finance & Administration Chief is also responsible for supervising the daily administrative operation of the Incident Command Post.

Planning – This section is responsible for collecting and evaluating information, including assessing the impact a disaster has had on a community and tracking the resources The Salvation Army has applied to assist. The section is supervised by a Planning Chief, who is responsible for developing an Incident Action Plan. The IAP is a kind of road map for the disaster relief operation, describing through measurable objectives what the incident management team wishes to accomplish and when.
Within The Salvation Army, the IMAT interacts with two other key elements: the Policy Group and the local Corps Officer or Salvation Army unit director. These elements exist outside the ICS structure and work in partnership with the Incident Commander and the other members of the ICS team.

Policy Group - A leadership group typically composed of the Divisional Commander and the Divisional Finance Board (DFB) that decides issues of policy and determines the direction, duration and financing of a disaster operation

Corps Officer / Local Unit Director – If not serving in a specific position within the incident management assistance team, the local Salvation Army Corps Officer (or civilian Unit Director) works alongside the ICS team to identify and mobilize key community resources in support of disaster operations. Note that the position is not technically part of the ICS team and is not supervised by the Incident Commander. The Corps Officer or Local Unit Director still reports to divisional headquarters and has direct access to the Policy Group.
The Operations Section is responsible for managing direct services on a disaster operation. While The Salvation Army may tailor its services to the unique needs of a particular incident, the most commonly delivered direct services can be organized into four categories:

- Mass Care (Feeding and Sheltering)
- Disaster Social Services (Emergency Assistance and Long-term Recovery)
- Bulk Distribution
- Clean-up and Reconstruction

Organizing these services into a single section recognizes that these services inter-relate and are part of a broader continuum of care. For example, shelter specialists (mass care) may refer residents of the shelter to a casework specialist (disaster social services) for assistance with purchasing clean-up supplies. After giving the disaster survivor a voucher to buy cleaning supplies, the casework specialist may, in turn, refer the victim to a Clean-up Team Manager (clean-up and reconstruction) for help in removing debris from his or her disaster-damaged home.

All these direct services are managed by a single supervisor called the Operations Chief. The Operations Chief is responsible for ensuring these services link together as seamlessly as possible. In large operations, the Operations Chief may appoint subordinate supervisors to directly supervise each of these services.
Disaster Social Services:  
Encompasses all casework and case management activities that are a prerequisite for the delivery of direct financial aid to disaster survivors. Direct financial aid, in turn, can be used to meet a wide variety of needs.

May be delivered:  
• Through an existing Salvation Army Social Services office.  
• Through a Disaster Assistance Center (DAC).  
• Via Outreach teams.

Key Points
Disaster Social Services encompass all casework and case management activities that are a prerequisite for the delivery of direct financial aid to disaster survivors. Direct financial aid, in turn, can be used to meet a wide variety of needs including Food, Clothing, Shelter, Transportation, Rental or Mortgage Assistance, Medical, Funeral, Clean-up Repairs, Furniture, Appliances, Reconstruction and Vehicle Repairs. Assistance often delivered in phases, beginning with Emergency Assistance in the Response phase of the disaster through Recovery and long-term case-management.

During an incident, Disaster Social Services assistance is delivered in three ways:

• **Through an existing Salvation Army Social Services office.** In many disasters, an existing Salvation Army corps may become the hub of disaster relief activities. In these instances, local social services caseworkers may also provide disaster assistance as an extension of the Salvation Army’s everyday social ministries within a community.

• **Through a Disaster Assistance Center (DAC).** During a major disaster, The Salvation Army may establish special facilities, called Disaster Assistance Centers (DAC), where disaster survivors may meet directly with a casework specialist and apply for disaster assistance.

• **Via Outreach.** In Outreach, casework specialists go to the disaster survivors. Outreach is especially useful in reaching people with special needs (who may not be able to travel easily); special populations; or when regular transportation systems are seriously disrupted. In some instances, casework specialists may even ride on canteens, registering clients as they receive meals from the mobile feeding unit.
Listed below is a hierarchy of ICS positions most commonly associated with the Disaster Social Services function.

**Section Supervisor**

- **Operations Chief** - Manages all direct services during a disaster relief operation. This includes emergency assistance, food service, sheltering, and the bulk distribution of goods. May also be responsible for supervising certain facilities, such as a distribution or service center where disaster victims receive direct services. The Operations Chief is often the first person appointed after the Incident Command and supervises the largest number of resources.

**Branch Directors & Unit Coordinators**

- **Disaster Social Services Branch Director** - Created to supervise casework-related programs and to provide technical guidance in delivering emergency assistance and disaster social service programs.

- **Disaster Assistance Center (DAC) Coordinator** - Created to coordinate the activities of Salvation Army disaster assistance centers where disaster survivors may register to receive emergency financial assistance. The disaster assistance center coordinator is responsible for ensuring financial assistance is issued to disaster survivors according to established emergency assistance guidelines and procedures.

- **Outreach Coordinator** - Created to coordinate the assignments and activities of Salvation Army outreach teams. Outreach teams are deployed directly to the field,
often working door-to-door, to deliver financial and material assistance directly to homebound disaster survivors.

**Single Unit Resource Managers**

- **Disaster Assistance Center (DAC) Manager** - Supervises personnel assigned to a Disaster Assistance Center (DAC). Responsible for overseeing the overall operation of that center and for ensuring good case management practices are followed.

- **Outreach Team Manager** - Supervises an outreach team. Outreach teams may be used to do door-to-door emergency assistance or to distribute in-kind goods, such as clean-up kits.

**Specialists**

- **Casework Specialist** – Acts as a caseworker within The Salvation Army’s emergency assistance program. Registers clients, assesses needs, process assistance forms, and issues funds, vouchers and/or gift cards.
Key Points

The next three slides show how Disaster Social Services may be organized within the Incident Command System (ICS).

For a local disaster, affecting 100 or fewer homes, disaster social services may be limited to a single caseworker. Because of the limited number of families affected and the scarcity of resources, it often does not make sense on an incident of this size to develop a separate disaster social services function with the disaster operation. Instead, families requiring social services assistance are often referred directly to the local corps and the local Salvation Army caseworker delivers disaster social services assistance.
Divisional disasters, affecting for example between 100 and 500 homes, may require The Salvation Army to establish a **Disaster Assistance Center (DAC)**.

This facility would be supervised by a **DAC Manager** who may manage numerous **Casework Specialists**.

Once the DAC has closed, outstanding disaster social services cases may be transitioned back to the local Salvation Army corps or service unit. Local corps or service unit caseworkers may continue to assist these disaster survivors, depending upon the availability of disaster and local resources.
Key Points

Catastrophic disasters may require the establishment of a complex disaster social services section. The Operations Chief may establish a Disaster Social Services Branch and assign responsibility for managing the section to a Disaster Social Services Branch Director. The Branch Director should have expertise in both disaster services and social services work.

A Disaster Assistance Center (DAC) Coordinator may be appointed if multiple Disaster Assistance Centers (DAC) must be established, for example, in multiple towns or counties. Each DAC will be supervised by an onsite DAC Manager while the DAC Coordinator ensures all the centers are operating consistently and following common guidelines. The same system may be used to establish a succession of Outreach Teams.

For catastrophic incidents, outstanding cases may be transitioned back to local Salvation Army units after the disaster operation has wound down. However, in some instances when needs and resources warrant, The Salvation Army may establish more sophisticated long-term recovery programs that include case management, reconstruction and other recovery programs.
Exercise: What Is A Disaster?

ICS is sometimes compared to spider’s web with all its functions connected together in a mutually supportive network.

- Consider how disaster social services, operating within the Operations function, works with the other ICS functions.
- Consider Public Information, Liaison, Safety, Emotional & Spiritual Care, Logistics, Finance and Administration, and Planning.
- List your answers on a flip chart.
- Be prepared to share your answers.
Unit Two

Disaster Declarations and Sequence of Service Delivery
Unit 2: Disaster Declarations and Sequence of Service Delivery

Key Points

This unit is designed to introduce participants to the federal disaster declaration process and provide an overview of key federal Individual Assistance programs. Participants will also learn how to answer basic questions about FEMA and how to make appropriate referrals to the agency. The unit will also introduce Sequence of Service Delivery; participants will learn how different disaster programs offered by different disaster agencies complement one another. Finally, the unit will look at the role charitable organizations have in disaster response and key VOAD partners of The Salvation Army.

*Photo by FEMA.*
Unit 2: Disaster Declarations and Sequence of Service Delivery

Key Points

The emergency management system in the United States is based upon the ability of the local government to provide the first level of response. Should the level of the incident require a response and recovery effort above and beyond the resources of the local government, the local government may request assistance from the next level of government. This process continues until the final level of federal government assistance is sought.

Government entities categorize disasters into three broad categories, based upon legal terms:

- **Non-Declared Disasters.** Represent common emergency incidents that occur every day across America. These incidents include house fires, apartment fires, small floods, search and rescue operations, minor tornados, and other incidents that while tragic for the families directly affected do not generally stress the ability of a local government or state to respond. Local government and non-governmental organizations provide the first response to assist the survivors. Survivors typically rely on private insurance to cover all or part of their disaster losses for real and personal property, vehicles, and medical expenses.

- **State of Emergency.** State governments have a responsibility to respond to emergency and disaster needs of the state’s inhabitants and augment local capacity when necessary. To do this, the state emergency management agency works in concert with local governments, voluntary agencies, business/industry and others in the community to develop an all-hazards emergency operations plan. When an emergency and/or disaster occurs, state and local governments will activate their respective plan. Should the severity of an emergency and/or disaster be at a level that will require a coordination of state and local government resources, the governor of a state will declare a **state of emergency**, activating the state’s emergency operations plan. Once a state of emergency has been declared, the full resources of the state can be accessed to respond to the incident, deploying for example state...
public works to remove debris and state law-enforcement personnel to maintain order. While state resources are often of significant value, very few states have programs designed to help individuals and families. As a result, survivors typically rely on private insurance to cover losses.

- **Presidential Declared Disasters** - Refer to significant emergency incidents that are declared major disasters by the President of the United States. When a Presidential Disaster Declaration is issued, the act activates a variety of federal disaster assistance programs that can be used to help both individuals and local governments recover. The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Public Law 93-288, as amended (the Stafford Act) was enacted to support state and local governments and their citizens when disasters overwhelm them. This law establishes the process for requesting and obtaining a Presidential disaster declaration, defines the type and scope of assistance available under the Stafford Act, and sets the conditions for obtaining that assistance.

There are two categories of declaration that the President may grant in response to a state’s request for disaster assistance: an **Emergency Declaration** and a **Major Disaster Declaration**.

- **Emergency Declaration**: An emergency declaration may provide for debris removal, search and rescue, emergency medical care, emergency mass care, emergency shelter, and provision of food, water, medicine, and other essential needs, including movement of supplies or persons.

- **Major Disaster Declaration**: Based on the governor’s request, the President may declare that a major disaster or emergency exists, thus activating an array of federal programs to assist in the response and recovery effort.

This system mirrors that of The Salvation Army. Local Salvation Army units (corps, service centers, and service units) are first to respond to emergencies within their communities. If the disaster is too large for the local unit to handle without help, additional resources may be requested through divisional headquarters. In a catastrophic event, divisions may request aid through territorial headquarters which can activate resources regionally or nationally.
Exercise

The challenge is that not all disasters are created equal. The smaller (or more local) the disaster, the less resources there are available to help survivors recover. Large disasters often generate a great of public attention and generosity. Smaller events, which may garner scarcely a mention in local media, are often over-looked. Similarly, disasters which receive a Presidential Disaster Declaration may provide access to federal assistance programs that can assist both individuals and communities. Without a declaration, many of these federal programs are not active.

It is important to understand that the Presidential disaster declaration process is a legal procedure to activate federal resources. Some incidents that are widespread but that do not overwhelm local and state resources may not qualify for a Presidential declaration, even though there may be a number of families that need help. Other events may appear much more limited in impact and affect only a small number of families; however, a Presidential declaration may be issued because of significant impact on critical infrastructure or the ability of local government to conduct essential operations.

Regardless, all disaster workers should be aware that there are resources available to disaster survivors under a Presidential disaster declaration than without one. When federal resources are available, disaster survivors should be directed and encouraged to take advantage of them.

*Graphic from istockphoto.com.*
The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act) (Public Law 100-707) is a United States federal law designed to bring an orderly and systemic means of federal natural disaster assistance for state and local governments in carrying out their responsibilities to aid citizens. The Stafford Act is a 1988 amended version of the Disaster Relief Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-288). It created the system in place today by which a presidential disaster declaration of an emergency triggers financial and physical assistance through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The Act gives FEMA the responsibility for coordinating government-wide relief efforts. The Act is named after Robert T. Stafford, a congressman, who helped pass the law. Congress amended the Act by passing the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA2K) (Public Law 106-390), and again in 2006 with the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act (Public Law 109-308).

Photo by FEMA.
Key Points

Refer participants to **FEMA’s Help After a Disaster: Applicant’s Guide to the Individuals & Households Program** for more detailed information on federal disaster programs. Two primary Federal programs offer disaster assistance.

- **FEMA’s Individuals and Households Program** provides money and direct services to those affected by a major disaster. Requirements must be met to qualify for help from this program. IHP does not cover business-related losses that resulted from the disaster and by law, IHP cannot provide money to you for losses that are covered by your insurance.

- The U.S. **Small Business Administration** provides low-interest loans for damage to property owned by homeowners, renters, businesses and private non-profit organizations that are not fully covered by insurance.

Additional federally-backed may also be available following a Presidential disaster declaration. These services can include: Aging Services, Agricultural Aid, Assistance From Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), Federal Reserve System (FRS), or the Federal Home Loan Bank Board (FHLBB) member banks, Business Loans, Consumer Services, Crisis Counseling, Disaster Unemployment Assistance, Hazard Mitigation, Insurance Information and Counseling, Legal Services, expedition of Social Security checks and benefits, IRS and state tax assistance, and Veterans’ Services.

Note that federal assistance will not cover all of the losses from damage to property. It is not intended to restore the damaged property to its condition before the disaster. In some cases it will only provide enough money, up to the program limits, to return an item to service. Assistance programs will not provide money for losses covered by insurance. While some money is available though grants, most federal disaster assistance is in the form of loans from the Small Business Administration that must be repaid.
Movie
Unit 2: Disaster Declarations and Sequence of Service Delivery

Key Points

After a presidential declaration of a major disaster, additional federal resources may be available to survivors. Survivors of a federally declared disaster must register for additional assistance through the FEMA toll-free number by the registration deadline imposed by the disaster declaration. Once an individual has called to register with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), an inspector will schedule an inspection of the damaged property and the assistance will be based on the inspector’s report.

Casework specialists must be aware that this registration starts the process for all federally sponsored and coordinated disaster assistance. Individuals who do not register are not eligible for federal services. It is imperative that Disaster Assistance Workers ask individuals if they have registered and if not, provide the necessary referral information.

Understanding the types of assistance available after a presidential disaster declaration is often bewildering for individuals needing assistance. Disaster Social Services personnel should be knowledgeable about the types of assistance that are available and process for obtaining assistance, so they can provide accurate information and make appropriate referrals.

FEMA Individual Assistance Programs

Disaster Social Services personnel must:

- Familiarize themselves with the FEMA IA program and the registration process
- Know federal assistance begins with registering
- Ask survivors if they have registered and if not, encourage them to do so
- Know the FEMA 1-800 Registration and Helpline numbers
- Know FEMA registration deadlines
- Avoid duplicating benefits available through FEMA
The FEMA 101 Quiz

1. How do I apply for federal disaster assistance?

2. What types of assistance does FEMA provide?

3. After I’ve applied, how long does it take before I get FEMA assistance?

4. I have homeowners insurance. That probably means I’m not eligible for FEMA assistance.

5. I have questions about my FEMA application. Who do I call?

6. I lost my car in the disaster. Can FEMA still help me?
7. I received a loan application packet from the Small Business Administration (SBA). I can’t afford a loan so what’s the point in filling it out?

8. Can undocumented immigrants receive FEMA assistance?

9. I am not going to apply to FEMA. I can struggle through this. Others need it more than I.

10. My FEMA assistance has run out and I still don’t have a permanent place to live. What should I do?
Disaster Social Services

Key Points

Disaster survivors rely upon multiple organizations for help in recovering from a disaster:

- Government agencies
- Private insurers
- Charities and nonprofit organizations
- Churches and other religious institutions

Even if FEMA aid is authorized, disaster survivors must still rely upon multiple organizations for help in recovering from a disaster:

- Government agencies
- Private insurers
- Charities and nonprofit organizations
- Churches and other religious institutions

Photo by FEMA.
Unit 2: Disaster Declarations and Sequence of Service Delivery

Key Points

Relief programs are arranged in an order that address disaster survivors’ most critical needs first and progress until all a disaster survivor’s needs have been met.

The term “Sequence of Service Delivery” describes the order of these relief programs and the process which disaster survivor should follow in order to maximize the amount of assistance they receive and avoid duplication of benefits.

Casework specialists have an obligation to help disaster survivors navigate the sequence of service delivery process and help them maximize the assistance available to them.
Key Points

When the President declares a disaster and authorizes providing Individual Assistance, it activates federal resources to help individuals and families.

The principle FEMA program is the Individuals and Households Program (IHP), which can help homeowners and renters affected by the disaster with housing needs and necessary expenses. To be considered for IHP housing assistance, the affected home must be the individual's primary residence and it must be located in the disaster area designated for Individual Assistance. To be considered for IHP assistance for necessary expenses or serious needs, the loss must have occurred in the disaster area designated for Individual Assistance. An individual or a pre-disaster member of the household must be a United States citizen, a non-citizen national or a qualified alien. Individuals and families may register for the IHP program by telephone, on the Internet, or if established, at a FEMA Disaster Recovery Center (DRC).

In addition to the FEMA IHP program, a Presidential disaster declaration that includes Individual Assistance may also activate several other federal programs. These may include low-interest loans from United States Small Business Administration to repair damages homes and replace personal property; disaster mental health services; the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP); and disaster unemployment assistance.

The benefit to disaster survivors is that under a Presidential disaster declaration, several additional safety nets are added to the sequence of service delivery cycle. And unlike charitable assistance programs, which are often dependent on donations, government programs, once authorized, are fully funded.
Charitable and volunteer organizations (both humanitarian and religious) are often the first and last sources of assistance for disaster survivors.

These groups may meet in associations called VOADs (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) at the local or state levels to share information and mutually support one another. Most major disaster charitable disaster responders belong to National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) though smaller community groups may only participate at local or state levels. More information on NVAOD and its members may be found at www.nvoad.org.

Local and state VOADs, which are often formed long before a disaster occurs, are often the catalyst for long-term recovery (LTR) and unmet needs committees. The operation of these committees in more detail in Unit 5.

The level of services voluntary organizations can provide during a disaster is often dependent on donations. Because donations are limited, VOADs must husband their resources closely in the response phase of a disaster in order to ensure some monies remain to help during the recovery phase. This is even more important when one considers that recovery needs are often far more costly than response.
Exercise: Working with Partner Organizations

From your own experience, consider some of the VOAD partners The Salvation Army has worked with to assist disaster survivors during response and recovery.

- Create a list of these organizations in your small groups, noting the services each agency provides.
- As your group creates its list, think about gap areas. Are there other organizations The Salvation Army should be working with to meet those needs?
Any Questions?
Unit Three
Managing a Disaster Social Services Program
Key Points

This unit describes a five step process for planning and delivering a disaster social services program. Participants will review each step in this process beginning with developing a needs assessment through integrating technology. The unit will also describe how to budget effectively and describes the major components of a service delivery plan.

Photo by The Salvation Army.
Key Points

This slide lists the five main steps in creating a disaster social services program. Each of these steps will be explained in greater detail in the proceeding slides.

1. Conduct a Needs Assessment
2. Propose a Budget
3. Develop the Service Delivery Plan
   - Establish methods to deliver services
   - Set Eligibility Guidelines
   - Set Financial Limitations
   - Establish Service Delivery Mechanisms
4. Secure Appropriate Staffing
5. Incorporate Technology
Key Points

Graphic from istockphoto.com.
Conduct a Needs Assessment

**Important Items to Consider:**
- Number of families affected
- Percentage of Insured
- Other Demographics
- Potential Service Gaps and Areas of Duplication
- The disaster’s impact on businesses and retail stores that serve the public
- Non-material needs (counseling, education, employment)

*Remember to use the Planning Section as a resource for further information.*
The second step in the process of managing a disaster social services program is to propose a budget.

This task is often very difficult and, early in the incident, can almost seem impossible due to the number of variables are possible. For example, Disaster Social Services personnel may find it hard to estimate the number of people who actually seek Salvation Army assistance. In most disasters, less than a quarter of the total number of people affected apply for aid with The Salvation Army. However, this number may be much higher if those affected are predominately poor; far less if those affected are predominately wealthy and insured. Cultural factors may also play a role; for example, some cultural groups may resist applying for assistance (even if they have legitimate hardships) because they fear social service agencies or are too proud “to take a handout.”

Regardless of these challenges, though, it is fairly easy to develop a broad budget and absolutely necessary. Costs for direct assistance programs can accumulate very quickly. With limited resources at their disposal, Salvation Army personnel must be cognizant of how the amount monies being spent and, if the budget is stretched quickly, the ramifications of discontinuing services.

Disaster social services personnel are considered a technical expert in helping estimate the costs for a disaster social services program. The proposed budget for direct aid program should be presented to the Operations Chief and Incident Commander for their consideration and input. Once the Incident Commander has accepted the proposal, the plan must be forwarded to the ICS Policy Group (typically, the Divisional Finance Board) for approval. The Policy Group, acting in accordance with Salvation Army policies, has the final authority for authorizing these expenditures.
Key Points

This graphic illustrates a simple process an estimated budget for a disaster social services program.

By estimating the total number of families The Salvation Army expects to serve and setting a maximum award per household, a projected cost can be quickly extrapolated. This represents the potential financial commitment that the divisional Policy Group must approve.

_Photo by istockphoto.com._
Key Points

A second way to budget cost is to take a gift and work backwards to see how many people can potentially be served by that gift.

A DAC Manager might use this information to quickly assess how long an assistance center will remain open. If the center is seeing approximately 500 eligible families per day, the center’s gift cards will run out in about 20 days.

Photo by istockphoto.com.
Key Points

Budgets can also help define a service delivery plan.

*Photo by istockphoto.com.*
Develop a Service Delivery Plan

The Service Delivery Plan

- Establishes policies and procedures for delivering disaster social services programs on a disaster operation.

Answers four key questions:
- How will disaster survivors and casework specialists connect?
- Who can receive services?
- How much may be awarded?
- How will the aid be dispensed?

Key Points

The Service Delivery Plan establishes policies and procedures for delivering disaster social services programs on a disaster operation.

The plan should be approved by both the Operations Chief and the Incident Commander and, depending on the scope of the plan and the limits of the Incident Commander’s authority, may also need to be authorized by the divisional Policy Group. While input from field personnel is essential, disaster social services personnel may also consult with social services personnel at divisional and/or territorial headquarters if additional technical expertise is needed. The plan should not be considered a static document and will evolve as conditions at the site change and survivors’ needs progress from response to recovery.

The Service Delivery Plan should cover four key areas and answer four basic questions:

How will disaster survivors and casework specialists connect? The first part of the plan establishes methods to deliver services and identifies the points where disaster survivors will meet with Salvation Army caseworkers. Options include using existing social services offices, opening Disaster Assistance Centers (DACs) or deploying Outreach Teams. This portion also identifies needed infrastructure, for example, a building to open a DAC, and tables, chairs and other necessary equipment to make it operational.

Who can receive services? The second part of the plan sets eligibility guidelines for applicants. This section also identifies any documentation survivors must provide for verification.

How much can be awarded? This part of the plan establishes standardized guidelines for direct financial assistance, setting financial limitations on which disaster-related needs The Salvation Army can help with and to what amount. A maximum award per family may also be set.
**How will the aid be dispensed?** The plan must also establish the service delivery mechanisms that will be aid into the hands of survivors. A variety of mechanisms may be used – from in-kind goods to gift cards – each with their own advantages and disadvantages. The plan must ensure accountability at all levels.
Exercise: The Service Delivery Plan

This exercise will look at the major components of a Service Delivery Plan.

1. Each group will be assigned a topic to discuss:
   - Methods of Service Delivery (page 64)
   - Setting Eligibility Guidelines (page 65)
   - Setting Financial Limitations
   - Establishing Service Delivery Mechanisms (page 67)

2. Develop a short (5 minute) presentation on that topic, answering questions posed by your instructor.

3. Select a presenter for your group.
The method of service delivery is the physical process connecting disaster survivors with casework specialists. Unit One highlighted some of the most common disaster social services assistance delivery methods:

- **Through an existing Salvation Army Social Services office.** In many disasters, an existing Salvation Army corps may become the hub of disaster relief activities. In these instances, local social services caseworkers may also provide disaster assistance as an extension of the Salvation Army’s everyday social ministries within a community.

- **Through a Disaster Assistance Center (DAC).** During a major disaster, The Salvation Army may establish special facilities, called Disaster Assistance Centers (DAC), where disaster survivors may meet directly with a casework specialist and apply for disaster assistance.

- **Via Outreach.** In Outreach, casework specialists go to the disaster survivors. Outreach is especially useful in reaching people with special needs (who may not be able to travel easily); special populations; or when regular transportation systems are seriously disrupted. In some instances, casework specialists may even ride on canteens, registering clients as they receive meals from the mobile feeding unit.

It is also possible that the best service delivery method involves a combination of two or three these systems. For example, a DAC might be established in the most densely populated area of a town ravaged by flooding while Outreach Teams are deployed to reach out to families living in rural areas.
Key Points

Reference the **Emergency Assistance Intake Policy & Eligibility Requirements** form that may be used as a template to address this issue on disaster events.

### Set Eligibility Guidelines

**Important Items to Consider:**
- Limit one application per household
- Applicant must demonstrate that their home was in the disaster-affected area and their needs are disaster-related
- Must be primary residence.
- Eligibility is not based on income, citizenship, or adherence to a particular religious creed.
- Verifying documents are required; however, loss of proper documentation should not prohibit service.
Key Points

Reference the Emergency Assistance Financial Limitations and Guidelines form.

This form should be used as a template when developing the Service Delivery plan and setting financial assistance guidelines.

**Set Financial Limitations**

**Important Items to Consider:**

- Use the template form.
- Set a maximum limit per household.
- In-kind assistance is provided in addition to financial aid.
- In unusual circumstances and with supervisory permission, additional monies may be awarded that may exceed the maximum award.
Key Points

Some of the most commonly used service delivery mechanisms are:

- **Bulk Commodities (clean-up kits, food boxes, comfort kits).** The Salvation Army may bring-in truckloads of bulk goods, such as food and cleaning supplies, and set-up distribution points to provide these supplies directly to disaster survivors. This service mechanism is particularly useful when retail stores may not be operational and survivors cannot go to buy needed items.

- **Checks.** One method of providing financial assistance, The Salvation Army may provide financial assistance in the form of a check. Checks are not made payable to the survivor, but directly a vendor such as a landlord (for rental assistance) or utility (to restore power, water, or other similar services).

- **Emotional & Spiritual Care.** The Salvation Army provides emotional and spiritual care through trained caregivers who are often deployed at the disaster site within the disaster assistance center. When a disaster survivor experiences severe mental trauma, The Salvation Army may provide a referral to a professional mental health provider.

- **Gift Cards and Debit Cards.** Gift cards are another method of delivering financial assistance that allows the disaster survivor to purchase exactly what they need from a local retailer. While this flexibility is a distinct advantage of gift cards, there is also potential for abuse. Gift cards are generally store specific while Debit Cards are usually associated a credit card company and can be used at a variety of locations.

- **In-Kind Goods.** The Salvation Army is one of the largest charitable distributors of donated goods during a disaster. The type of donations available during a disaster ranges greatly from one incident to the next and may include food, clothing, personal hygiene items, cleanup supplies, furniture, pet supplies, and reconstruction materials.
- **Labor (clean-up, reconstruction crews).** The Salvation Army, either directly or in partnership with other organizations, may support volunteer teams to help clean-up or repair disaster-damaged homes.

- **Mass Care (canteens, shelters).** Sometimes the quickest and most efficient way to feed and house people may be through mass care resources. Disaster survivors may be directed to Salvation Army canteens for food and to disaster shelters for a place to sleep.

- **Referrals.** While The Salvation Army offers a wide variety of

- **Vouchers.** Another very common form of direct financial assistance, a voucher is basically a written promise from the Salvation Army to a specific vendor agreeing to pay for items bought by a disaster survivor. Vouchers offer greater control over what survivors may buy than a gift card, but can be much more cumbersome to process. Vouchers are often used to purchase more expensive service items such as furniture.

*Photo by FEMA.*
Once the service delivery plan has been set, the next step is to Secure Appropriate Staffing.

A trained casework specialist, doing initial intake, should be able to process 3 to 4 families per hour depending on the needs of disaster survivors. Families are seldom “typical” and there are many circumstances that may require a casework specialist may need to take more time with an individual. Some survivors need to talk and tell their story, but don't necessarily need an emotional and spiritual care specialist. Families with special needs may require more sophisticated interaction. Language can also be an issue and, even if a translator is present, the process is extended. Similarly, if a casework specialist is new, he or she will take longer. If computers are being used, some caseworkers will be more proficient than others.

Personnel requests should be made through the Finance & Administration section of the Incident Command. Requesters should assume that it will take a minimum of 48 hours between the time the initial request is made and the actual caseworkers arrive on scene.

In addition to personnel, other supplies from tables to chairs to computers and forms will be needed to perform the disaster social services function. Material items should be requested through the Logistics Section.
Incorporating Technology

What are the challenges in adding technology to your disaster social service operation?

Are there disadvantages?
Incorporating Technology

Important Items to Consider:

- What software will you use?
- What is the computer proficiency of the caseworkers?
- Do you have the necessary technological infrastructure in place and, if not, how long will it take to establish?
- What level of IT support is present?
- What is the cost and is it justified?
It is important to remember:
Disaster Social Services is one of many steps in the overall process of disaster recovery.
Any Questions?
Key Points

This unit is will provide an overview of a Salvation Army Disaster Assistance Center (DAC). The participants will learn about key components of the DAC and how to set-up and close the facility. The unit will culminate in a table-top exercise where the participants will practice setting up a DAC and responding to challenges while running the facility.
Key Points

One of the most common ways to deliver disaster social services in a large disaster to establish a Salvation Army Disaster Assistance Center (DAC).

A Disaster Assistance Center (DAC) is a temporary facility established during a disaster where disaster survivors can meet with casework specialists and register to receive disaster assistance. DACs will vary in size depending on the size of the disaster and available facilities. Some DACs may be equipped with computers and perform all registration electronically; others will be reliant on paper forms and applications. Some DACs will be independent facilities while others may be co-located with other disaster facilities, such as a distribution center (allowing disaster survivors to receive financial aid and in-kind gifts at the same location).

DACs are supervised by a DAC Manager who provides on-site supervision of the center and the casework specialists assigned to the facility. DAC mangers should be trained in disaster social services work and have a delegated authority to assist applicants who demonstrate serious needs, such as medical or funeral, beyond the limit affixed in the Emergency Assistance Financial Limitations and Guidelines for the disaster.

The next slides will look at four key areas of a Disaster Assistance Center: exterior, reception area, service area, and security.
Disaster Assistance Center: Exterior

- Ensure exterior adequate signage, including hours and days of operation
- Clearly mark entrances and exits
- Ensure adequate parking for applicants and staff
- Identify handicapped parking
- If necessary identify areas for an exterior queue
- Avoid other services that will congest access to the DAC.

Key Points
Disaster Assistance Center: Reception Area

- Ensure receptionists are in place to greet clients
- Ensure receptionists can explain to clients what verification documents are needed.
- Ensure there is queue for clients who are waiting
- Provide information or entertainment (if appropriate) in the waiting area.
- Design the reception area as a "choke point" that catches unauthorized personnel from entering the DAC unescorted.

Key Points
Disaster Assistance Center: Service Area

- Ensure each caseworker has table and chairs for an appropriate number of clients.
- If feasible, provide computers. Install photocopiers, printers and telephones.
- Ensure adequate space between each casework station – for privacy and noise reduction.
- Utilize emotional and spiritual specialists and provide for private space for interaction with survivors.
- Ensure secure areas for housing confidential files and service delivery mechanisms, such as gift cards.
- Ensure private space for caseworkers for breaks and meals.

Key Points
The Salvation Army recognizes that the Emergency Assistance process is a curricular cycle with three principle steps. These steps are:

**Interviewing & Registration.** The first step in the cycle, the emergency assistance process begins with an interview between a casework specialist and the disaster survivor. During the interview process, The goal of the casework specialist is to gather information from the disaster survivor. This information will be used to register the person in The Salvation Army disaster social services system, assess the needs a survivor has, and ultimately, be used to determine whether the survivor is eligible to receive services. An *Emergency Assistance Intake Form* is often used during this step to collect data about the survivor; this form may be paper or electronic. During the interview process, the casework specialist must be careful to listen to survivor carefully, allowing the survivor to express needs, and must be both culturally and emotionally sensitive.

**Determining Eligibility.** The second step in the emergency assistance cycle is to determine eligibility. Based on the information collected during the interview process and documentation provided, the casework specialist must determine what services the survivor is eligible to receive. In making a determination, the casework specialist should refer to the *Emergency Assistance Eligibility Requirements* form (which may vary slightly by disaster).

**Providing Assistance.** Once a survivor has been interviewed, registered, and confirmed as eligible, the casework specialist must provide assistance. This step includes considering three things. First, the casework specialist should consult the *Emergency Assistance Financial Considerations and Guidelines*, which indicates the types of assistance available during the disaster incident. Because resources vary by incident, not all forms of assistance may be available on every disaster. Second, knowing assistance is limited with a dollar amount per household, the casework specialist must often help the disaster survivor prioritize which needs are most important.
Finally, once needs have been prioritized, the casework specialist must determine the most expedient way in which to deliver this assistance. For example, a need for food may be filled with a gift card to a local grocery, a voucher to a local restaurant, or a gift of a food box from a Salvation Army distribution center.

In circumstances where the victim has extenuating needs, such as a disaster-related injury, the casework specialist should refer the survivor to a supervisor. Supervisors have the authority to raise dollar amount per household on households which have serious disaster-related needs, such as injuries or death. The Salvation Army may also refer survivors to other disaster relief agencies and access additional assistance. For example, after a Presidential disaster declaration, The Salvation Army encourages all disaster survivors to register with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for federal disaster assistance. (In Unit 4 of this course, we will take a closer look at how disaster relief agencies work together to provide aid in a coordinated sequence of service delivery).

It is also important to note that after assistance is provided, the emergency assistance cycle does not end. Disaster survivors who need additional help may return and apply for additional assistance. In this case the cycle starts again. Returning survivors are again interviewed as a first step to determine what needs brought them back to The Salvation Army and, in some cases, additional documentation may be collected by the casework specialist. Returning survivors may also need to provide evidence showing how they used assistance given on their first visit. This process may be repeated many times until a disaster survivor fully recovers.
Disaster Social Services Forms

- Intake Form
- Consent for the Release of Confidential Information
- Intake Policy and Eligibility Guidelines
- Financial Limitations & Guidelines
- Disaster Services Voucher
- Voucher Registration
- Gift Card Registration

Key Points
The Salvation Army has an obligation to ensure the DAC is a safe and orderly place.

If necessary, uniformed security may be provided. (Be careful this element is not perceived as intimidating to clients)

Ensure emergency exits are present and accessible
**Exercise: DAC Manager For A Day!**

The purpose of this exercise is to allow participants to practice:
- Setting up a Disaster Assistance Center
- Securing the resources to support operations
- Solving typical problems

Each group will receive a map of a facility that has just been secured as a Disaster Assistance Center.

The Incident Commander has asked you to make the necessary preparations to open the doors of the building.
Exercise: DAC Manager For A Day!

Your assignments are:
1. Using the map provided, diagram how you will set up the DAC.
2. Make a list for the Logistics Chief of the supplies that will be needed to open the DAC.
3. Draft a personnel request for the Finance & Administration Chief requesting staff.
4. As your DAC opens, solve any problems that arise.
5. Be prepared to present your answers.

Key Points
### Closing the Disaster Assistance Center

- Provide at least 24-hour notice that the DAC will be closing.
- Ensure adequate signage is posted announcing the closure and providing referral phone numbers and locations.
- Account for any remaining service items, such as gift cards.
- Ensure all case files are transferred to the local Salvation Army unit.
- Brief local Salvation Army social services personnel on outstanding cases and any special issues.

### Key Points
Any Questions?
Unit Five

Transitioning to Long-term Recovery
Key Points

The unit will look at the Long-term Recovery Process and the importance of a Recovery Plan. The unit will also discuss the purpose of a Long-term Recovery or Unmet Needs Committee and how these groups for the last safety net in the sequence of service delivery for disaster survivors. The unit culminates in an exercise that simulates the presentation of a case to one of these committees.

Be sure to advise participants that this unit is not designed to fully prepare the participants to manage a long-term recovery operation. It simply provides an overview of the process, allowing participants to bridge on to other, more detailed long-term recovery training at a future time.

Photo by FEMA.
Key Points

The Salvation Army's participation in long-term disaster recovery is dependent on two factors:

- First, are there outstanding needs within the impacted community? If all disaster-related needs have been met, then there is obviously not a need for The Salvation Army to remain engaged. For example, homeowners who are adequately insured are able to rebuild with the proceeds of their insurance settlement and do not generally need long-term help from non-profit organizations.

- Second, are resources available? In order for The Salvation Army to provide long-term recovery assistance, resources, including money, in-kind donations, and volunteers) must be available. When these resources are not available and, even if there is need, services cannot be provided.

Catastrophic disasters often generate the majority of donations and, consequently, The Salvation Army is often more capable of engaging in long-term recovery operations for large events than small. On some disasters, The Salvation Army may set-up specific long-term recovery programs which may continue for months or even years after an incident. However, long-term recovery does not necessarily need to be a separate program. Long-term assistance may also be delivered through local Salvation Army units by existing caseworkers who may help disaster survivors in addition to their regular caseload.

*Photo By FEMA.*
Key Points

Long-term recovery case management builds upon casework conducted during the emergency assistance phase. The two processes are similar and follow a similar cycle. However, case management is a more comprehensive and detailed process in which the casework specialist and the disaster survivor work together to develop a “recovery plan”.

Taking a closer look at Long-term Recovery Cycle, the three steps are virtually identical to the Emergency Assistance cycle.

- **Interviewing & Registration** builds upon casework completed during the response phase. Before meeting an applicant for long-term recovery assistance, disaster social service personnel should first review information collected from the disaster survivor on previous visits. Even if the individual received assistance from The Salvation Army previously, a more in-depth interview may still be needed before the applicant can qualify for long-term recovery assistance. Needed information may include more details about the survivor and his (or her) household; the losses that were suffered; any relief and recovery support already received; and personal resources, such as savings and income, that may be applied to an overall recovery plan. The interview process should result in at least a preliminary plan for identifying and isolating immediate and long-term needs.

- **Determining Eligibility** involves verifying the extent of survivor’s losses and ensuring that these losses were a direct result of the disaster. The casework specialist must also verify what assistance the survivor has already received from other organizations, including FEMA, private insurers, and other voluntary organizations. Verification of this information will help assure the wisest use of available funds and help prevent duplication of benefits. In some cases, the casework specialist may require the survivor to provide substantial backup documentation, including copies of forms filed with FEMA and other nonprofit organizations, financial and insurance information, income, deeds and/or tax returns.
Once an eligibility determination has been made, the next step is Providing Assistance. Unlike in emergency assistance, where the casework specialist options are somewhat limited and maximum spending limits are clearly defined, long-term recovery may involve complex multi-step programs (such as home reconstruction) and may total tens of thousands of dollars.

Because of the complexity of the recovery process, the assisting organization and the disaster survivor should begin this step by drafting a Recovery Plan. The Recovery Plan is a written agreement between the assisting organization and the disaster survivor that outlines step-by-step the process the survivor will follow toward full recovery. The plan outlines expectations the assisting agency has of the disaster survivor (i.e., what they will do to help themselves) and as those expectations are met, the commitments the agency makes to helping the survivor fully recover.

In nearly all cases, the resources of The Salvation Army will not be enough to meet all the needs of a disaster survivor. Consequently, as disaster social services personnel develop the Recovery Plan they may need to reach for resources outside their own agency and collaborate with other organizations through pre-established partnerships or networks, such as a local or state VOAD. The casework specialist may also need to present the case to a Long-Term Recovery (LTR) Committee or Unmet Needs Committee. Organizations on an LTR or Unmet Needs Committee will often pool resources to help a family, each agency contributing a small part toward a total solution.

Disaster social services personnel should be aware that the Recovery Plan is not a static document and will need to be revised as resources and the circumstances of the disaster survivor change. When an update of the Recovery Plan is required, disaster social service personnel should repeat the Long-term Recovery Process, interviewing the client for new information, then verifying the new information is correct and that the client is still eligible, and finally providing assistance based on a revised Recovery Plan.

Unlike in the Emergency Assistance Cycle, the final goal of the long-term recovery process is to end the cycle and, having met the disaster survivors’ needs, close the case. Ideally, Case Closure will occur when all steps in the survivors’ recovery plan are complete, and the survivor has no outstanding disaster-related needs. However, often despite the hard work of dedicated casework specialists, some cases must be closed early because a survivor refuses to take responsibility for his (or her) own recovery or because available resources have run out. In these instances, a letter should be sent to the survivor indicating his/her case has been closed or placed in the inactive file with an explanation as to why. A copy of this letter should be placed in the file.
The **Recovery Plan** is a written agreement between the assisting organization and the disaster survivor.

The plan outlines step-by-step the process the survivor will follow toward full recovery. Each step is measurable ensuring progress toward the overall goal of full recovery.

The plan outlines expectations the assisting agency has of the disaster survivor (i.e. what they will do to help themselves) and as those expectations are met, the commitments the agency makes to helping the survivor fully recover.

The goal of the Recovery Plan is to help the disaster survivor regain his (or her) pre-disaster level of functionality.

A typical Recovery Plan may include rebuilding a home, obtaining employment, resolving insurance issues, or addressing disaster-affected health or medical needs.

When developing a recovery plan, disaster social services personnel should keep in mind:

- An unmet need is something the survivor cannot meet for themselves or has not been met by action through other disaster relief agency.
- It may be a loss of life, injury, income, housing, vehicle or household goods.
- It may be caused by stress.
- It is **not** a pre-disaster condition.
- It is **not** an ongoing social issue.
• Assistance is not intended to upgrade a survivor’s previous living condition, although this may occur incidentally (for example, a reconstructed house may be in better overall condition and have better amenities than the older home the disaster destroyed).

*Photo By FEMA.*
In nearly all disasters, a percentage of those affected by the incident struggle to recover. Often these individuals have lived at or below poverty prior to the disaster or had pre-existing special needs. Regardless of the exact cause, after all other forms of assistance are exhausted including aid provided by FEMA, these individuals still have needs that must be addressed.

The final safety net in the sequence of service for these individuals is often a Long-Term Recovery Committee (also known as an Unmet Needs Committee). These committees are comprised of numerous organizations which coming together regularly to share cases with unmet needs. The organizations then try to pool their resources with the purpose of assisting the survivor to recovery. An LTR meeting often resembles diplomatic negotiations as each organization works to contribute a small piece of an overall solution. For example, if an elderly client needs some repairs to a disaster-damaged roof, one agency may in-kind supplies such as shingles from their warehouse, another a small grant to buy necessary supplies that can’t be obtained from the first agency’s warehouse, another agency may agree to provide free labor to make the repairs, and a fourth may loan the tools to do the job.

National and state VOAD members may play a key role in long-term recovery, acting as a catalyst to bring local agencies together to form an LTR or Unmet Needs Committee. Similarly, FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaisons (VALs) may also act as the catalyst, providing technical guidance on federal programs and suggesting a structure for the group gleaned from past disaster incidents.

Some of the most common NVOAD participants to an LTR or Unmet Needs Committee include:

- Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC)
- Church of the Brethren
In addition to NVOAD or VOAD agencies, there may be other significant partners in the community, area, or state who have resources to contribute to long-term recovery efforts. Examples include civic organizations, social service agencies, local churches, community foundations, community health and mental health agencies and national organizations, agencies, and faith-based organizations.

*Photo by FEMA.*
After a Recovery Plan has been developed and disaster social services personnel have identified needs within the plan that cannot be met by resources from within The Salvation Army, The Salvation Army may present the case to a Long-Term Recovery or Unmet Needs Committee. A designated Salvation Army representative (preferably with a disaster social services background) will be selected as The Salvation Army's representative to the committee and will present these cases to the member organizations. This representative must also be given the authority to commit Salvation Army resources to other cases brought to the committee by other organizations.

In reviewing cases, the committee may offer resources, ask for additional documentation, make a commitment based on obtaining additional assistance from another source, or deny assistance.

Generally, a case will be presented to the recovery group only when the casework is complete. However, there are situations when an interim presentation may be appropriate if the case manager needs assistance or creative problem solving to enable moving ahead with the casework. As a courtesy, the case manager should state clearly that gathering information or ideas is his/her intent…and not use the interim presentation as a substitute for doing the casework.

After determination of the unmet needs has been made and all verifications have been secured, use the following guidelines to prepare for the presentation of the case:

- Bring copies of the appropriate presentation form, signed release of confidentiality forms, budget, all estimates, and other pertinent documents to distribute to agencies that may be willing to assist.

- Maintain confidentiality, but use of the family name is suggested rather than codes. No more information than that which is required should be given.
• Summarize the disaster-related needs. Be specific in identifying the continuing long-term recovery needs.

• Itemize what is needed to complete the recovery. If there are alternatives, explain why they were not chosen.

Letters of commitment have been used in some groups to track commitments and as an opportunity for clarifying the commitments made. The commitments should be recorded. The agencies providing assistance should commit to a date the funds or services will be provided and identify whether delivery will be to the survivor or a vendor.

If the resources committed by the agencies in the Unmet Needs Committee do not cover 100% of a recovery plan cost, there may be other options such as contacting other agencies with resources that are not represented on the LTR or Unmet Needs Committee, determining if there is another working group providing resources, reviewing the case internally again and requesting consideration for additional funds, etc.

Even after a case has been processed through the LTR or Unmet Needs Committee, The Salvation Army remains the case manager and must continue to supervise the Recovery Plan. Salvation Army disaster social service personnel should also follow up with the organizations making commitments to the case. If completion dates are missed, the organization’s representative should be contacted for additional information.

When assistance has been obtained through the LTR or Unmet Needs Committee, a report should be made regularly to the group on the status of the survivor’s recovery until the case is closed. Remember:

• It may be necessary to bring the case back to the committee for reconsideration for additional resources.

• A follow-up report should be made back to the LTR or Unmet Needs Committee on the results of the commitments.

Photo by FEMA.
**Exercise: LTR Case Presentation**

The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate how The Salvation Army might bring a case before an LTR or Unmet Needs Committee.

Participants will practice:

- Networking with other organizations,
- Advocating on behalf of a survivor
- Filling the gaps in a recovery plan
- Addressing needs in partnership with other agencies.
Exercise: LTR Case Presentation

1. Each participant will represent an LTR organization:
   - One person will play The Salvation Army representative, who will be presenting a case for review by the committee
   - Other participants will role-play representatives from other LTR organizations

2. The Salvation Army representative will present a case to be considered by the committee

3. Other agency representatives should listen to the case, ask questions, and determine what assistance (if any) they can provide

4. The exercise is complete when all unmet needs are met.
Any Questions?
Conclusion

Disaster Social Services
Course Review

By completing this course, participants will be able to:

- Identify the ICS function that includes disaster social services and key positions within that function
- Describe the disaster declaration process and FEMA Individual Assistance programs
- Identify the five steps in developing a disaster social services program and perform these actions on a disaster

Key Points
By completing this course, participants will be able to:

- Set-up and supervise a Disaster Assistance Center (DAC)
- Describe the transition process between emergency assistance and long-term recovery
- Identify the role of Long Term Recovery or Unmet Needs Committees.
Key Points