

**ANNEX C**

**SHELTER & MASS CARE**

**CITY OF HOUSTON**

# APPROVAL AND IMPLEMENTATION

## Annex C

### Shelter & Mass Care



\_\_\_\_\_  
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Greater Houston Area Chapter, American Red Cross

6/19/07

Date



\_\_\_\_\_  
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7-17-07

Date

# RECORD OF CHANGES

## Annex C

### Shelter & Mass Care

<b>Change #</b>	<b>Date of Change</b>	<b>Entered By</b>	<b>Date Entered</b>

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## ANNEX C

### SHELTER & MASS CARE

#### I. AUTHORITY

See City of Houston Basic Plan.

#### II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this annex is to outline organizational arrangements, operational concepts, responsibilities, and procedures to protect evacuees and others from the effects of an emergency situation by providing shelter and mass care.

#### III. EXPLANATION OF TERMS

##### A. Acronyms

ARC	American Red Cross
DDC	Disaster District Committee
DWI	Disaster Welfare Inquiry
EMC	Emergency Management Coordinator
EOC	Emergency Operations or Operating Center
HHSC	Health and Human Services Commission
OEM	Office of Emergency Management
NIMS	National Incident Management System
PIO	Public Information Officer
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
TSA	The Salvation Army
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

##### B. Definitions

###### Mass Care

Mass Care is the function and process by which the immediate emergency needs of disaster victims or emergency workers in a disaster-affected area are addressed in the most expeditious manner, without identifying specific needs of individuals or families on a case-by-case basis.

###### Welfare Inquiries

Welfare inquiries are requests from relatives, friends, employers, or others for information on the status of persons in an area affected by an emergency situation who cannot be located because they have evacuated, become separated from their families, or cannot be contacted by normal means of communications. Registration of disaster victims at shelters provides some of the information needed to answer welfare inquiries. For emergency situations that extend beyond several days, the American Red Cross (ARC) may activate a Welfare Inquiry system [known in many other states as a Disaster Welfare Inquiry (DWI) system] to handle such inquiries.

## Shelter

Sheltering may include congregate sheltering or the use of commercial facilities, such as motels and hotels, as shelters for individuals or families. Shelters may be open in anticipation of a disaster, during an evacuation or after a disaster occurs

Shelters are intended as a safe haven from impending disaster and/or short-term emergency housing until disaster victims can return to their homes or locate alternate housing after a disaster. Whether before or after a disaster, shelters will be located in safe areas and will provide appropriate services

## Special Needs Individuals/Groups

Includes the elderly, medically fragile, mentally and/or physically challenged or handicapped, individuals with mental illness, and the developmentally delayed. These groups may need to have specially trained health care providers to care for them, special facilities equipped to meet their needs, and may require specialized vehicles and equipment for transport. This population requires specialized assistance in meeting daily needs and may need special assistance during emergency situations.

For the purposes of this annex “special needs” will be defined as “those who cannot take care of themselves during an evacuation.” Listed below are the six categories of “special needs;”

1. Level 0 – Persons without transportation.
2. Level 1 – Persons dependent on others or in need of others for routine care.
3. Level 2 – Persons with disabilities such as blind, hearing impaired, amputee, deaf/blind
4. Level 3 – Persons needing assistance with medical care administration, monitoring by a nurse, dependent on equipment, assistance with medications, or medical health disorders.
5. Level 4 – Persons outside an institutional facility care setting who require extensive medical oversight (i.e., IV chemotherapy, ventilator, peritoneal dialysis, hemodialysis, life support equipment, hospital bed).
6. Level 5 – Persons in institutional settings such as hospitals, long-term care facilities, assisted living facilities.

## Service Animals

A service animal is defined as a guide dog, signal dog or any other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability.

Service animals represent a special class, different from pets or other animals, and usually have some form of photo identification.

-Organizations operating a shelter facility will continue to permit an individual with a disability the use of a service animal in its disaster or evacuation shelters; or will make special arrangements to accommodate the individual, together with the service animal, within the facility or in another appropriate facility.

-In all such circumstances, the care and supervision of the service animal is the responsibility of the individual and not that of the organization operating the shelter facility.

#### **IV. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS**

##### **A. Situation**

1. The City of Houston's Hazard Analysis identifies numerous hazards that could cause an evacuation of some portion of the City of Houston (Annex E, Evacuation). Although the City of Houston has a resident population of approximately 2.0 million, the most likely scenarios could require shelter/mass care for a few families to as many as 100,000 persons.
2. The City has the responsibility for coordinating shelter and mass care to protect local residents displaced from their homes and others who evacuate into the City's jurisdiction due to emergency situations.
3. Shelter and mass care needs may range from provisional accommodations to extended accommodations. Provisional accommodations are intended to provide short-term interim relief from the elements, restroom facilities, a place to sit, etc. during the initial hours of an event such as an apartment fire or a hazardous materials situation. METRO buses, City of Houston recreational facilities, local churches, and/or schools might be used for this purpose. Normally these would be used for a limited number of people where the expected time is less than a day. Extended accommodations are normally for large numbers of evacuees where feeding, sleeping, and shower facilities are desirable and a variety of assistance must be provided to evacuees. These are expected to cover a time period of a day to several days. Additionally, ARC does not operate shelters capable of accommodating individuals with Special Needs (Level 3-5), however, ARC can assist other entities in the management of such shelters.
4. The ARC has been chartered under federal law to provide mass care to victims of natural or manmade disasters. Hence, the City's efforts should be coordinated with the ARC, which will normally operate shelter and mass care operations insofar as its capabilities permit.
  - a. The ARC signs agreements with local governments, school districts, churches, and other organizations to use their facilities for shelter and mass care operations. The ARC identifies suitable shelter facilities based on a set of standards, maintains a list of

potential shelters, maintains shelter kits, and trains shelter management personnel.

- b. Local governments may also sign agreements relating to the operation of shelter and mass care and feeding facilities, when needed, with other volunteer groups (i.e., TSA). Such agreements detail the responsibilities of both the volunteer group and the local government. See Appendix 2 for pertinent local agreements.
5. If the ARC services are not available, other volunteer organizations and religious groups may open shelters. Some of these organizations and groups coordinate their efforts with the ARC, while others may operate these facilities themselves and assume full responsibility for them.

#### B. Assumptions

1. Shelters may have to be opened with little notice. Until the ARC or other volunteer support personnel arrive and assist with the responsibility for managing such shelters, the City of Houston will coordinate shelter activities.
2. Volunteer organizations that normally respond to emergency situations will assist in shelter and mass care operations.
3. If additional resources are needed to conduct shelter and mass care operations, support may be requested pursuant to inter-local agreements and from state and federal emergency management agencies. When requested by a local jurisdiction, the Governor may authorize the use of military forces to support shelter and mass care operations.
4. Facilities planned for shelter and mass care use will be available at times of need.
5. When evacuation is recommended during an emergency situation, approximately 80 percent of those for whom evacuation has been recommended will evacuate. The vast majority of evacuees will seek refuge with friends or relatives or go to commercial accommodations rather than a public shelter. In addition, some people who are not at risk may spontaneously evacuate and some of those individuals may seek public shelter.
6. For hazards that are highly visible or extensively discussed in the media, people may evacuate prior to an official recommendation to do so. Hence, shelter and mass care operations may have to commence early in an emergency situation.
7. Essential public and private services will be continued during shelter and mass care operations. However, for a major evacuation that generates a large-scale shelter and mass care operation, normal activities at schools, community centers, churches, and other facilities used as shelters may need to be curtailed.

## V. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

### A. General

1. The City is responsible for developing a plan, integrating the concepts of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), for coordinating and providing mass care services to persons affected by a disaster. The requirements for services may vary depending upon the nature, type, and level of the emergency. The City will work closely with volunteer organizations that provide shelter and mass care support to determine the availability of shelter and feeding facilities, encourage facility owners to sign agreements for use of those facilities, and encourage facility owners to allow their personnel to participation in shelter management training.
2. The Incident Commander or the emergency management staff is expected to determine the need for opening shelters and commencing mass care operations based on the emergency situation that prevails.
3. The Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) may request the opening of shelters and recommend the closing of shelters when they are no longer required. These actions are coordinated with the ARC and other shelter providers. Refer to Appendix 1 for statement regarding shelter list. The EMC may further assign tasks and responsibilities to support shelter and mass care efforts.
4. The City, in cooperation with volunteer disaster assistance organizations, will coordinate the provision of temporary shelter and essential life support services for people displaced from their homes.
5. The ARC and other private disaster assistance organizations will be called upon to:
  - a. Open and temporary shelter the displaced population.
  - b. Activate or organize shelter teams and provide shelter kits.
  - c. Register those occupying shelters.
  - d. Provide feeding, emergency first aid, and other basic life support needs for those occupying temporary shelters.
  - e. For extended shelter operations, activate a disaster welfare inquiry system.
6. Provide periodic reports on the status of shelter and mass care operations. In some disasters, the federal government may be requested to provide emergency housing. Disaster victims will be encouraged to obtain housing with family or friends or in commercial facilities. To the extent possible, local government will assist and coordinate post-disaster housing needs of the homeless.
7. Refer to Appendix 4 for statement regarding Hurricane Reception & Care.

## B. Shelter

1. Shelter Selection. The ARC publishes standards for temporary shelters. The following criteria may be useful in screening facilities to determine which merit more detailed inspection:
  - a. Must be structurally sound and in a safe condition.
  - b. Must not be located in an area subject to flooding or where flooding can cut off access to the facility.
  - c. Must not be in a hazardous materials risk area.
  - d. Should have adequate sleeping space.
  - e. Should have sufficient restrooms for the population to be housed.
  - f. Should have adequate climate control systems.
  - g. Kitchen/feeding area is desirable.
  - h. Shower facilities are desirable if the facility will be used for more than one day.
  - i. Telephone service is essential.
  - j. Adequate parking is desirable.
2. Shelter Facilities
  - a. The ARC executes agreements with building owners for use of structures as shelters and normally inspects the facilities it plans to use to determine their capacities and the availability of various types of equipment.
  - b. Schools are the most frequently used shelters because they generally have substantial space, a feeding capability, sufficient restrooms, and adequate climate control systems. Those who wish to utilize schools for sheltering must secure permission in writing from school officials.
  - c. Community centers and churches are also frequently used as shelters. Permission to use these facilities or any other facilities for disaster operations should also be secured in writing from the owners or operators of those facilities.
  - d. In most shelters, evacuees must sleep on the floor because there are generally no cots immediately available. Public information messages coordinated with the ARC should highlight this situation and encourage those who plan to take refuge in a public shelter to bring bedding.
3. Shelter Operations
  - a. The specific facilities that will be used for sheltering and feeding during an emergency will depend on the needs of the situation, the status of available facilities, the location of the hazard area, and the

anticipated duration of operations. Shelters are typically opened and closed based on need. When occupancy of existing shelters reaches 75 to 80 percent, consideration should be given to opening an additional facility.

- b. It is generally more effective in terms of resource utilization to operate a few large shelters rather than numerous smaller shelters.
- c. Shelters should be managed by individuals with shelter operations training, *preferably individuals who work in the facility on a daily basis*. The ARC will maintain a listing of shelters and mass care facilities in the local area.
- d. To ensure consistency in shelter activities, it is desirable that all shelters follow a general set of operating guidelines. When the ARC opens a shelter, ARC policies guide how the facility is staffed and operated.
- e. Shelter managers are expected to provide periodic reports on the number of occupants and the number of meals served. Volunteer groups operating shelters may also be required to report this information through their organizational channels.
- f. Local government is responsible for providing the following support for shelter operations:
  - 1) Security and, if necessary, traffic control at shelters.
  - 2) Fire inspections and fire protection at shelters.
  - 3) Transportation for food, shelter supplies, and equipment if the organization operating the shelter cannot do so.
  - 4) Transportation of shelter occupants to feeding facilities, if necessary.
  - 5) Basic medical attention, if the organization operating the shelter cannot do so.
- g. Evacuees normally return to their homes as soon as the danger has passed. Hence, most shelters are closed quickly and returned to normal use. However, some evacuees may be unable to return to their homes due to damage or destruction. It may be necessary to have one or more shelters remain open for an extended period until those who cannot return to their residences can be relocated to motels, rental units, mobile homes, and other types of temporary lodging. Individuals being sheltered in long-term shelters should have access to showers, on-site feeding and cots.

### C. Mass Care

Mass care includes the registration of evacuees, feeding of evacuees and emergency workers, and provision of other life support needs for shelter occupants.

1. Registration

- a. The purpose of registration is to be able to respond to inquiries about the status of evacuees, monitor health concerns, and provide a basis for post-emergency follow-up support.
- b. The sheltering organization/entity will handle registration of those being sheltered and provide appropriate information to the City of Houston Office of Emergency Management (OEM). The Shelter Officer, located in the EOC, should coordinate with other organizations that operate shelters to ensure that evacuees occupying those facilities are registered and information provided to the EOC.

2. Feeding

- a. Both fixed facilities and mobile units may be used for preparing and serving meals. Fixed facilities include schools, churches, and civic buildings serving as shelters. The ARC, TSA, and other disaster relief agencies may also deploy self-contained mobile feeding units to supplement fixed feeding facilities.
- b. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), through the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), food banks, and commercial facilities provides USDA commodities used in preparing meals or for distribution to disaster victims.
- c. If a school is used as a congregate feeding site, the school may use USDA commodities already on its shelves to prepare meals for mass care operations. USDA will replace them or credit their entitlement dollars as long as school officials provide HHSC with an itemized list of which commodities were used and daily meal counts. USDA commodities **may not** be used without prior approval from HHSC. The request must come from the ARC. Form FCS-292, which is a report of commodity distribution, must be completed by school officials within 30 days after the termination of assistance to the disaster victims. Also HHSC will arrange to have additional USDA commodities shipped to the feeding site, if necessary, either directly from USDA or one of the HHSC warehouses.

3. Other Needs

In addition to the provision of shelter and mass care services, evacuees may need assistance with clothing, basic medical attention, prescription medicines, disaster mental health services, temporary housing, and other support services. Some of these services may be provided by the same volunteer organizations that are operating shelters. Many human services programs also serve disaster victims that have not been evacuated from their homes. A description of human services programs and procedures

for requesting human services support are provided in Annex O (Human Services).

D. Special Needs Groups and Individuals

1. Special facilities include hospitals, nursing homes, group homes, and correctional institutions. Such facilities are responsible for the welfare and safety of their clients, who may need specially trained staff to care for them and special equipment and facilities to meet their needs. Institutions supporting special needs populations are required by state and federal regulations to have disaster preparedness plans that provide for evacuation and relocation of the institution's population in an emergency.
2. Mass care shelters for the general population are not staffed or equipped to handle special needs groups. These groups, particularly medical patients and prisoners, should not be relocated to shelters used by the general public. In the event that special facilities encounter difficulty in evacuating and relocating their clients, local officials may need to assist those facilities in arranging transportation and in locating suitable reception facilities. It may also be necessary to assist in relocating some medical patients who are living at home.
3. Public shelters can only accommodate individuals with special needs who require **minimal care** and are attended by their families or other caregivers.

E. Handling of Pets

1. Evacuees who go to the homes of relatives or friends or commercial accommodations with their pets do not normally pose difficulties during an evacuation. However, evacuees with pets seeking public shelter can create potential problems. For health reasons, pets, with the exception of service animals, are not allowed in emergency shelters operated by the ARC and most other organized volunteer groups.
2. Depending on the situation, one or more of the following approaches to handle evacuees arriving with pets will be used:
  - a. Advise pet owners, via media announcements, of kennels, animal shelters, and veterinary clinics that have agreed to temporarily shelter pets.
  - b. Direct pet owner to a public shelter that has covered exterior corridors or adjacent support buildings where pets on leashes or in carriers may be temporarily housed.

F. Public Information

1. The public information staff is expected to develop emergency public information messages to advise those who are or will be evacuating of the location of public shelters and general shelter policies.

2. The public information staff should also provide information on the emergency situation to shelter managers so they can pass such information on to shelter occupants.

G. Welfare Inquiries

The City will attempt to answer disaster welfare inquiries to the extent possible using the registration data obtained at shelters and other facilities until the ARC can assume that function. For more information on Welfare Inquiries, see Section IX.E of this annex.

H. Actions by Phases of Emergency Management

This plan follows an all-hazard approach and acknowledges that most responsibilities and functions performed during an emergency are not hazard specific. Likewise, this plan accounts for activities before and after, as well as during emergency operations; consequently, all phases of emergency management are addressed as shown below.

1. Mitigation

- a. Identify volunteer organizations that could assist in shelter and mass care operations and develop cooperative agreements.
- b. In coordination with volunteer organizations, identify suitable shelters and feeding facilities.

2. Preparedness

- a. In coordination with volunteer organizations, identify potential shelters, and develop general shelter and mass care procedures for the local area.
- b. Coordinate basic communication and reporting procedures.
- c. Develop facility setup plans for potential shelters.
- d. Identify population groups requiring special assistance during an emergency (i.e., senior citizens, special needs, etc.) and ensure that preparations are made to provide assistance.

3. Response

- a. Open and staff shelters and mass care facilities.
- b. Provide information to the public on shelter locations and policies.
- c. Assist in the registration of evacuees.
- d. Provide food, clothing, first aid, and other essential services to evacuees.
- e. Maintain communications from mass care facilities to the Shelter Officer.
- f. Provide periodic reports on shelter occupancy and meals served.

- g. Provide information to victims needing additional services.
- 4. Recovery:
  - a. Assist evacuees in returning to their homes if necessary.
  - b. Assist those who cannot return to their homes with temporary housing.
  - c. Deactivate shelters and mass care facilities and return them to normal use.
  - d. Inform public of any follow-on recovery programs that may be available.

I. National Incident Management System (NIMS)

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) will be used to manage and efficiently mitigate any such incident by integrating a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications into a common organizational structure. NIMS is used to organize both near-term and long-term field level operations for a broad spectrum of emergencies, from small to complex incidents, both natural and manmade. Description of the implementation is located within the Basic Emergency Management, Annex I - Public Information, Annex M – Resource Management and Annex N – Directions. Departmental policies and procedures are developed based on these principles.

**VI. ORGANIZATION & ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

A. General

The Emergency Management Coordinator will manage shelter and mass care operations as the Shelter Officer. Services will be provided through the coordinated efforts of OEM, ARC, TSA and other volunteer agencies and/or through mutual-aid agreements with various support groups. Shelter/lodging facility managers will be responsible for the operation of their individual facilities.

B. Operations will be organized in accordance with NIMS guidelines.

C. Task Assignments

- 1. EMC will:
  - a. Develop shelter/mass care program.
  - b. Recommend activation and deactivation of facilities.
  - c. Manage Shelter and Mass Care operations.
- 2. ARC Government Liaison will:
  - a. Act as a resource to the ARC Disaster Relief Operation.
  - b. Establish and maintain contact and coordination, at the appropriate levels, with government units that are providing resources for

disaster relief, advocacy for those affected by a disaster, and/or long-term recovery assistance.

- c. Maintain a current list of names and telephone numbers (both office/day and after-hours) of government contacts.
  - d. Identify potential problems that could affect relationships with participating government agencies and, if necessary, refer these problems through appropriate administrative channels.
  - e. Regularly keep government entities informed of its disaster response activities throughout the local ARC jurisdiction.
  - f. Ensure the ARC is represented at appropriate meetings held by participating government agencies as part of their disaster response efforts.
  - g. Maintain a good working relationship with all entities involved in the response effort.
  - h. Share information regarding the following activities:
    - 1) Identification of other volunteer agencies development of emergency agreements.
    - 2) Identification of potential shelters and mass care facilities.
    - 3) Coordination of mass feeding among the ARC, TSA, Baptist Men, etc.
    - 4) Coordination among the ARC, TSA and other relief agencies the bulk distribution of human-need items (i.e., cleanup kits, ice, etc).
3. Law Enforcement will:
- a. Provide security and law enforcement at shelters/mass care facilities.
  - b. Provide escort for Red Cross and Salvation Army Disaster Services (i.e. Mobil Cantinas, Emergency Communications vehicles) when appropriate and available.
  - c. Provide back-up communications.
  - d. Traffic control.
4. Fire Service will:
- a. Inspect shelter/mass care sites for fire safety.
  - b. Provide and maintain shelter fire extinguishers.
  - c. Train shelter personnel in fire safety and fire suppression.

5. EOC will:  
Coordinate public transportation to emergency shelter and feeding sites, bulk distribution points, etc.
6. Health and Medical (Fire Department/EMS & Health Department) will:  
Coordinate medical assistance at Mass Care Facilities
7. Human Services Officer (Health Department) will:  
Coordinate Crisis Counseling.
8. ARC through agreement will:
  - a. Staff and operate shelter/mass care facilities.
  - b. Register evacuees.
  - c. Provide emergency clothing.
  - d. Provide emergency food.
  - e. Process inquiries from concerned families outside the disaster area.
  - f. Provide temporary home repairs.
  - g. Maintain a current list of shelters, emergency feeding sites, and lodging facilities.
9. TSA through agreement will:
  - a. Assist in mass feeding operations.
  - b. Collect and distribute food, clothing, and other supplies.
10. The PIO will:
  - a. Provide information to the public on the locations of shelters and shelter operating policies.
  - b. Provide updates on the emergency situation to shelter managers to be passed on to shelter occupants.
11. Public Works & Engineering will:  
To the extent possible, ensure power, water supply, and sanitary services are operable at shelter and mass care facilities during emergency conditions.

## **VII. DIRECTION AND CONTROL**

### **A. General**

1. As Identified in the Basic Plan, Section 1.8, Policies Decisions regarding emergency management (Shelter and Mass Care) rest with the Mayor and

coordination of this policy is delegated to the Emergency Management Coordinator for implementation and general direction.

2. The Shelter Officer will plan and manage the conduct of shelter and mass care activities, coordinating as necessary with volunteer organizations that participate in shelter operations or mass feeding and other departments and agencies.
3. Shelter and feeding facility managers will be responsible for the operation of their individual facilities.
4. Methods of Direction and Control will be consistent with NIMS guidelines.

B. Line of Succession

The line of succession will be in accordance with the SOPs established by each City department and disaster relief agency.

### VIII. INCREASED READINESS ACTIONS

- A. Refer to Basic Plan, Section 3.2.2 for definition of Readiness Levels **Green** (Level V) through **Red** (Level I). Part B below is specific to this annex and in addition to actions/activities for the identified readiness levels defined in the Basic Plan.
- B. ARC may institute the following readiness conditions in conjunction with EOC levels of activation:
  1. Condition 3 (**Yellow**)
    - a. Review procedures for emergency public shelter/human services.
    - b. Review contact information.
  2. Condition 2 (**Orange**)
    - a. Review mutual aid agreements with relief agencies responsible for shelter/mass care operations.
    - b. Meet with local relief agencies on shelter/mass care requirements.
    - c. Initiate public service information regarding shelter locations and procedures.
    - d. Review shelter requirements.
  3. Condition 1 (**Red**)
    - a. Request assistance.
    - b. Open public shelters in coordination with local relief agencies.
    - c. Commence public shelter operations.

## **IX. ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT**

### **A. Records**

1. Shelter and feeding facility managers shall maintain a record of supplies received and expended. Copies of these records will be provided to the Shelter Officer, who shall maintain a consolidated file.
2. Documentation of Costs. All departments and agencies will maintain records of personnel and equipment used and supplies expended during shelter and mass care operations as a basis for possible cost recovery from a responsible party or insurer or possible reimbursement of expenses by the state or federal government.

### **B. Reports**

1. Shelter Managers will report occupancy and number of meals served figures to the Shelter Officer.
2. The EOC will include shelter occupancy information in the periodic Situation Report sent to the DDC and other agencies. Information on the Situation Report is provided in Annex N, Direction & Control.
3. The ARC and other volunteer groups may also report shelter and feeding information through their organizational channels.

### **C. Training & Exercises**

1. The EMC will coordinate with the ARC to insure that shelter management and other appropriate training is made available to local officials and volunteers who participate in shelter and mass care activities. All departments and organizations should ensure that their personnel are trained to accomplish the tasks assigned to them.
2. Emergency exercises shall periodically include a shelter and mass care scenario based on the hazards faced by this jurisdiction. Volunteer organizations that participate in shelter and mass care operations shall be invited and encouraged to participate in such exercises.

### **D. Communications**

The primary communications between shelter and mass care facilities and the Shelter Officer will be by telephone. If telephones cannot be used, radios should be provided; amateur radio operators may be able to assist with communications needs.

### **E. Welfare Inquiries (DWI)**

1. We will attempt to respond to disaster welfare inquiries until the ARC can establish a Welfare Inquiry system to answer requests from relatives and friends concerning the safety and welfare of evacuees or those in disaster areas. The Welfare Inquiry system uses information from shelter lists, casualty lists, hospitals, and other sources to aid in family reunification and in responding to inquiries from immediate family members from

outside the affected area about the status of their loved ones. A Welfare Inquiry system may not be established in short duration emergency situations.

2. Mass care facilities assist in Welfare Inquiry by gathering information on disaster victims through registration of victims at shelters. Assistance may also include the distribution of postcards to shelter residents for their use in contacting family members outside the affected area. The organization of the Welfare Inquiry function may vary considerably. For a small-scale operation, the local ARC chapter may provide assistance. For a large operation, a Welfare Inquiry team may be established. The need for the Welfare Inquiry function and its composition depend on factors such as the number of families affected, media coverage of the event, lack of communication capabilities in the affected area, and the number deaths, injuries, and illnesses.
3. Shelter managers must be aware of the importance of confidentiality in gathering and releasing information about shelter occupants.

F. External Assistance

If shelter and mass care needs cannot be satisfied with local resources and those obtained pursuant to inter-local agreements and from volunteer organizations, authorized local officials may request state assistance from the DDC Chairperson located at the Texas Department of Public Safety in Houston.

**X. ANNEX DEVELOPMENT & MAINTENANCE**

- A. OEM has the responsibility for the development and maintenance of this Annex. As such, extensive coordination with support agencies and volunteer groups will be cultivated. Each agency will develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that address their assigned tasks.
- B. This annex will be revised annually and updated as necessary.
- C. Departments and agencies assigned responsibilities in this annex are responsible for developing and maintaining SOPs covering those responsibilities.

**XI. REFERENCES**

- A. ARC Disaster Services Program, *Mass Care – Preparedness and Operations*, ARC 3031, April 1987.
- B. ARC Disaster Services Program, *Disaster Welfare Inquiry*, ARC 3044, April 1996.
- C. Annex C (Shelter & Mass Care) to the *State of Texas Emergency Management Plan*
- D. Texas American Red Cross home page: [www.redcrostexas.org](http://www.redcrostexas.org). This site contains information on the Texas ARC as well as information on the coverage areas for the ARC Chapters as well as addresses and phone numbers for those chapters.

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1..... Reception and Care Facilities  
Appendix 2..... Shelter & Mass Care Document-American Red Cross  
Appendix 3..... Shelter & Mass Care Document-Salvation Army  
Appendix 4..... Hurricane Reception and Care

**Appendix 1 to Annex C**  
**RECEPTION AND CARE FACILITIES**

As a Shelter and Mass Care provider for the City of Houston, the local ARC (Greater Houston Area Chapter) updates annually facilities they plan to use as shelters in the event of an emergency or disaster. The ARC maintains a listing of potential shelter sites on file at their Houston headquarters.

**Appendix 2 to Annex C**  
**SHELTER & MASS CARE DOCUMENT**

**AMERICAN RED CROSS AGREEMENT**

**I. GENERAL**

The Greater Houston Area chapter of the ARC, hereafter referred to as the ARC, identifies all personnel employed by this disaster relief agency, to include its volunteer force, and any other personnel assigned for special duties.

**II. MOBILIZATION**

The Disaster Director, when notified of impending disaster will coordinate, under direction of the Chapter Disaster Chairperson, all disaster relief activities as they apply to the ARC. Personnel with pre-disaster assignments will proceed to designated points and carry out their assigned duties and will take all precautions necessary to safeguard chapter records. Emergency mass care services provided:

- A. Food for disaster victims and emergency workers
- B. Temporary shelter
- C. Medical and nursing aid
- D. Clothing

**III. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

- A. The Disaster Director or Disaster Chairperson will be notified before any impending disaster. During this stage, designated committees within the chapter will activate in-house emergency plans that outline specific duties that must be accomplished before any disaster occurs. For the benefit of the citizens of the City of Houston, these plans should include, but are not limited to:
  - 1. Notifying designated representative to take up assigned duties in the EOC to serve as liaison between the City of Houston and the ARC;
  - 2. Notifying chapter communications coordinator to take up assigned duties at chapter headquarters and establish radio contact with appropriate agencies;
  - 3. Checking all emergency equipment, special clothing, supplies and special vehicles required to carry out pre-disaster and recovery duties;
  - 4. Checking fuel to include type, amount needed, and procedure for refueling, location, and time needed;
  - 5. Coordinating with the following city departments concerning shelters:
    - a. Emergency Management Agency for evaluation and determination of which buildings will be opened as ARC shelters. For ARC-designated shelters, administrative responsibility and

financial control are inseparable. ARC makes no commitment for expenditures other than designated shelters agreed on by the ARC. Shelters will be opened when evacuation begins.

- b. Police department for auxiliary police;
  - c. School systems for shelter kits;
  - d. Churches for shelter kits and other support.
- B. If disaster occurs, all personnel will report to designated places and proceed with assigned duties.
- C. The Emergency Management Agency will be kept informed on a recurring basis of the status of all shelters used, to include:
- 1. Shelter location
  - 2. Number of shelterees
  - 3. Special requirements

#### **IV. DISASTER RECOVERY**

The ARC, since its beginning, has served as the community agent for disaster relief. Its ability to respond to the needs of the community is based on the organized efforts of many volunteers, on community groups, and on the recognized fields of responsibility of the individual, the family, the community, and the components of the community.

The ability of each of these groups to function in a disaster represents a vital community resource that must be considered when combating the efforts of disaster and bringing about an orderly recovery.

It is also during this phase that the ARC has a vital role in providing assistance to help alleviate human suffering.

- A. Immediate assistance on individual family basis may provide for:
- 1. Disaster Welfare Inquiry and information services
  - 2. Emergency assistance for food, clothing, rent, bedding, selected furnishings, transportation, medical needs, temporary home repairs, occupational supplies, and other essentials
  - 3. Referral to government disaster programs
- B. Additional aid for recovery to families may be provided after all other resources are either exhausted or unavailable.

## V. AUTHORITY

The ARC is an instrumentality of the United States Government with a Congressional Charter, codified at 36 U.S.C., 1 et. seq., under which it is charged to, "...carry on a system of relief in time of peace and apply the same in mitigating the suffering caused by pestilence, famine, fire, floods, and other great national calamities..." This roll has been restated in the Disaster Relief Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-288), which says "...nothing contained in this act shall limit or in any way affect the responsibilities of the American National Red Cross under the Act of January 5, 1905."

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Emergency Management Coordinator  
City of Houston

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Director, Disaster Services  
Greater Houston Area Chapter  
American Red Cross

**Appendix 3 to Annex C**  
**SHELTER & MASS CARE DOCUMENT**

**SALVATION ARMY AGREEMENT**

**I. GENERAL**

The Houston Metro Area Command Corps of TSA, hereafter referred to as TSA, identifies all personnel employed by this disaster relief agency, to include its advisory board members, service units, other volunteer forces, and any other personnel assigned for special duties.

**II. MOBILIZATION**

The offices-in-charge, when notified of impending disaster, will remain at his/her assigned position at the local area TSA headquarters. From this vantage point, he/she will direct all disaster relief activities as they apply to TSA. Personnel with pre-disaster assignments will proceed to designated points and carry out their assigned duties.

Take all precautions necessary to safeguard TSA records.

Services Provided

- A. Emergency Mass Care:
  - 1. Emergency feeding service
  - 2. Mobile canteen service
  - 3. Collection and distribution of food, clothing, and other supplies
  - 4. Supplementary shelters
  - 5. Counseling and morale building services
  - 6. Specialized skills, such as skills of interpreters and social workers
- B. Emergency Family Services
  - 1. Social service inquiries
  - 2. Survey of family needs

**III. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

- A. The officer-in-charge will be notified before any impending disaster. During this phase, designated groups within the corps will activate in-house emergency plans that outline specific duties that must be accomplished before any disaster occurs. For the benefit of the citizens of the City of Houston, these plans should include, but are not limited to:
  - 1. Notifying designated person to take up assigned duties in the EOC to serve as liaison between the City of Houston and TSA.
  - 2. Checking all emergency equipment, clothing, supplies, and special vehicles required to carry out pre-disaster and recovery duties.

3. Checking fuel, to include type, amount needed, and procedure for refueling, location, and time needed.
  4. Entering into any agreement with the ARC, the Mennonite Disaster Service, and other relief or disaster assistance organizations, whenever such organizations are engaged in providing relief before, during, and after a major disaster.
- B. If a disaster occurs, all personnel will report to designated places and proceed with assigned duties.
- C. The emergency management agency will be kept informed on a recurring basis of the status of all supplementary shelters used by TSA, to include:
1. Shelter location
  2. Number of shelters
  3. Special requirements

#### **IV. DISASTER RECOVERY**

In the tradition of meeting and preparing for needs as they arise, TSA has structured its organization program to respond to disaster emergencies, both natural and manmade. It is also during this phase that TSA is prepared to render services to help alleviate human suffering.

- A. Services Provided:
1. Collection and distribution of medicine, food, clothing, supplies, or other items
  2. Repairs to homes as possible
  3. Supplementary shelter for those displaced
  4. Household furnishings
  5. Emergency feeding service
  6. Mobile canteen services
  7. Counseling and morale building service
  8. Specialized skills, such as skills of interpreters and social workers
  9. Social services inquiries
  10. Survey of family needs
  11. Assistance in identification and registration of disaster victims

#### **V. ADMINISTRATIVE**

- A. Any member of TSA staff and/or volunteer temporarily designated as an agent for the city in making any special purchase or contract for services before, during, or after any disaster will provide the EMC with all associated paperwork as soon as possible.

- B. The EMC will also be provided daily reports on a recurring basis on the status of all supplementary shelters, their location, and the status of shelterees falling in this special category.

**VI. AUTHORITY**

Authority for the preceding is contained in the terms prescribed in the Disaster Relief Act of 1974, Section 312.

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Emergency Management Coordinator  
City of Houston

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Officer-in-Charge  
Salvation Army

## **Appendix 4 to Annex C**

### **HURRICANE RECEPTION & CARE**

Due to its close proximity to the Gulf of Mexico, the City of Houston is not considered a primary evacuation destination for hurricane evacuees.