

## Virtual Volunteer Reception Center

Prior to deciding if your organization/VOAD or State Commission should “stand up” a VRC your first step is to activate a virtual volunteer reception center or in other words a web based platform that allows volunteers to register, communicates a consistent message to those interested in volunteering, posts current opportunities to volunteer related to the disaster and has a mechanism to communicate back with the volunteers who register.

In today’s technology world, virtual volunteer reception centers have become critical to manage and communicate with spontaneous unaffiliated volunteers.

**\*Even if a VRC is “stood up” virtual VRC stays active and sends consistent message**

### Steps to Creating a Virtual Volunteer Reception Center:

- 1) **Banner** for website-need policy as to when to enact/enable the Banner (for LA SERVE= based on calls received in office) It is suggested that this banner be populated prior to a disaster and customized when a disaster strikes. Once decision is made that the Banner is needed go into technology platform to “enable”.

As message changes the information on the banner changes on the website

Example: If a hurricane is entering the Gulf and you are a Gulfcoast Action Center planning to manage Spontaneous Unaffiliated Volunteers, “enable” this banner once the hurricane is in the Gulf explaining volunteers are not yet needed but they “can go ahead and sign up now”

Example: With the Gulf Oil Spill-the Banner was enabled the day the state of emergency declared

- 2) **Write first message** (first thing done for Virtual VRC-need consistent message)
  - a. Post on Website
  - b. Email out to constituency with link + message- email or twitter should be enough to let the prospective volunteer know what is going on and the detail should be on the website. Some may get enough info. from the email/twitter to know they are interested in the posting, others will go because of it.
- 3) **Create a call center** at the Voluntary Agency that is managing the Virtual VRC. Make sure staff is refreshed on how to take calls (become behind scenes call center-explain how to register on website and if the volunteer who calls is unable to go online the person answering the call will go online and register for the volunteer)
- 4) **Begin identifying opportunities** and posting opportunities. Once event occurs begin identifying opportunities (ideally you want to pre-populate technology platform pre-disaster and customize once disaster strikes)

-At state level pull from affiliates/volunteer centers-then sending the folks who have registered

-At Local level pull from partners for opportunities

- If you can get a job description before the event from the organization, have them pre-populated and turn them on with the banner or as appropriate.

- 5) **Create Link to Social Media** platforms and post links on Social Media pages (Twitter/Facebook/Blogs) directing persons interested in volunteering to the Virtual VRC site to register.

-Have all agencies with local and state VOADs posting same message related to volunteering