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June 19, 2008

To: Department Heads
From: 
William T Fujioka
Chief Executive Officer

DISASTER SERVICE WORKER PROGRAM

The attached policy and guidelines describe the County employee Disaster Service Worker (DSW) Program as developed jointly by the Chief Executive Office, Office of Emergency Management and the Department of Human Resources. This program is mandatory for all eligible County employees.

The California Emergency Services Act designates public employees as DSWs that may be deployed to perform activities outside the course and scope of their regular employment which promote the protection of lives and property or mitigate the effects of a disaster. The DSW designation requires employees to sign an Affirmation of Loyalty, receive training on basic emergency management principles, and document specialized skills.

While some County departments still administer the Affirmation of Loyalty, over the years many have abandoned the practice. Additionally, while many County employees have received training in emergency management, others have never received any training.

Compliance with this program will allow the County to:

- Educate employees on their roles and responsibilities in a disaster.
- Comply with State and Federal emergency management guidelines.
- Collect information needed to mobilize County response in times of crisis.
- Seek future Federal emergency management funding.

Department Heads
June 19, 2008
Page 2

New hires must complete the required training program within 60 business days of their date of hire; current employees must complete the training program by June 30, 2009.

The policy contains a provision for training that will be provided, free of charge, by the American Red Cross. The Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles has embarked on an ambitious pilot program to provide mass care and shelter operations training to Los Angeles County employees. In a large-to-catastrophic disaster, the greatest need for County employee DSWs will likely be in support of mass care operations at Red Cross shelters. This policy will enable the County to provide necessary training in a cost-effective manner.

Los Angeles County employees have always responded willingly to the emergencies and disasters we face in Southern California. This program will increase our capacity to be effective in our efforts to restore normalcy to our community after a disaster. Questions about this program and policy should be directed to Ms. Jeanne O'Donnell, Office of Emergency Management, at (323) 980-2227.

WTF:SRH:RDC
RW:JOD:lbm

Attachment

c: Each Supervisor

DISASTER SERVICE WORKER PROGRAM POLICY AND GUIDELINES

PURPOSE

This policy establishes a framework for the Los Angeles County Employee Disaster Service Worker (DSW) Program. It is intended to guide managers, supervisors, and employees in meeting the State-mandated responsibility to serve as Disaster Service Workers in times of community need and crisis.

California law requires disaster service personnel and volunteers to receive approved training on the structure and function of emergency management. The County must ensure that employees are formally trained and have taken the Affirmation of Loyalty. In addition to this document, departments must develop supplemental information that instruct employees how and under what conditions DSWs may be activated and methods and strategies for reporting in after a disaster.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chief Executive Office (CEO), Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is charged with organizing and directing the preparedness efforts of County facilities and the employees that work in those facilities. OEM developed the DSW training program to be compliant with State and Federal guidance. The Department of Human Resources will implement the training program and maintain a record of trained employees.

Responsibility of Department of Human Resources (DHR): It is the responsibility of DHR to provide a means to track employee compliance with the DSW Program. DHR is responsible for the Learning Management System (LMS) application which constitutes the official system of record for this Program. DHR will also coordinate classroom training sessions, as needed, and compile quarterly data files that can be used in the County Emergency Operations Center (CEOC). DHR will work with department personnel officers to develop implementing methods and guidelines for this Program.

Responsibility of a line Department/Department Emergency Coordinator (DEC): It is the responsibility of each department to provide guidance to employees on how to report in after a major emergency or disaster. Departments will also provide information to employees on how they will be activated as DSWs and any other special instructions. DECs will coordinate with DHR to compile employee information into an on-line database for use by DHR staff in times of emergency or disaster. As needed, DECs will work with department supervisors and DHR to provide classroom training sessions. DECs will work with supervisors to track compliance with the training program.

Responsibility of Departmental Line Supervisor: It is the responsibility of the supervisor to provide each employee with a reasonable time, during normal work hours, to complete the DSW training program, the Affirmation of Loyalty, and DSW registration form (if required). New hires must complete the training program within 60 business

days of the date of hire; current employees must complete the training program by June 30, 2009. Supervisors must document compliance with the training program including collecting evidence of specialized skills claimed on the employee form.

Responsibility of Employee: It is the responsibility of the employee to coordinate with their supervisor a reasonable time to complete the DSW training program, the Affirmation of Loyalty, and DSW registration form (if required). Registration information will be updated annually at the time of the employee's performance review. Employees should list any specialized skills on the registration form and provide copies of supporting documentation to their supervisor. The Affirmation of Loyalty is administered only once and will be in effect for the duration of County employment.

EXCEPTIONS

The following employees are exempt from DSW training requirements:

- A. Legal aliens are not eligible to serve as public employee DSWs.
- B. Employees hired to fill intermittent, temporary emergency, or successive employments may not be required to be trained as DSWs. The decision to provide training and the Affirmation of Loyalty to these employees is at the discretion of each department.
- C. Employees categorized as Peace Officers or Fire Fighters are exempt from the training requirement.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

A DSW registration form may be required depending on how a department chooses to administer this Program. Documentation of specialized skills should be attached to the completed form. Completed DSW registration forms with attachments may be maintained in an employee's personnel file within the department and updated annually at the time of annual performance evaluation. The official records that demonstrate compliance with this Program will be maintained in the LMS system.

AFFIRMATION OF LOYALTY

A signed Affirmation of Loyalty is required for all employee DSWs. The County Clerk designates the individuals authorized to administer the Affirmation of Loyalty. Once taken, the Affirmation of Loyalty is effective for the period of time the person remains a public employee. DHR will work with department personnel officers to develop implementing methods and guidelines for deputizing staff to administer the Affirmation of Loyalty.

TRAINING REQUIREMENT

County employee DSWs are required to receive instructional training on both Part 1 - DSW Awareness **and** Part 2 - Emergency Management Basics. Part 3 is optional free training provided by the American Red Cross, the Department of Health Services, and the OEM.

Part 1 – DSW Awareness

The purpose of this training is to introduce County employees to the role, responsibilities, and legal obligations of serving as a DSW. Approved options to complete this Part 1 training segment include:

- A. On-line self-study (1.5 hours). The Los Angeles County Learning Academy, through the County DHR, maintains this training course and tracks employee compliance, **or**
- B. Group classroom training (2 hours). Classroom training conducted by a designated department representative or department Emergency Coordinator. The department representative or Emergency Coordinator will maintain a record of training.

Part 2 - DSW Emergency Management Basics

The purpose of this training is to introduce County employees to the structure and function of California and National emergency management systems.

- A. On-line self-study (1.5 hours). The Los Angeles County Learning Academy, through the County DHR, maintains this training course and tracks employee compliance, **or**
- B. Group classroom training (2 hours). Classroom training conducted by a designated department representative or department Emergency Coordinator. The department representative or Emergency Coordinator will maintain a record of training, **or**
- C. On-line self-study (3-5 hours). The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maintains this training as IS-100 and IS-700. If using Option C, employees must also complete training on the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS). SEMS training (3-4 hours) is available periodically in a classroom setting.

Each of these three courses provides an independent certificate of completion that employees will need to present to their supervisor to verify compliance.

Part 3 – Optional Training Courses

▪ American Red Cross Shelter Management Training

The American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles (ARCGLA) is the primary organization responsible for the provision of mass care (feeding and sheltering) during and immediately following disasters.

After a catastrophic disaster the greatest need for County employee DSWs will likely be in support of mass care operations at Red Cross shelters. Recognizing this need, ARCGLA has developed an 8-hour mass care training course for County employees. The program seeks to provide ARCGLA with the human resources it will need to effectively fulfill its mission of providing mass care and enable the County of Los Angeles to provide necessary training to thousands of DSWs in a cost-effective manner.

Program Guidelines:

1. ARCGLA agrees to provide this training at no cost to County departments, usually in classes of 30 employees per session.
2. County departments will provide their employees an opportunity to attend a training course.
3. ARCGLA and County departments will work jointly to determine the most appropriate training facility to use for this training. The most appropriate training facility may be one that is available on-site where the employees are located. However, ARCGLA has training facilities throughout the Los Angeles area that can be used if necessary.
4. Coordinators in each department will set up training sessions.
5. County departments that have had DSWs trained by ARCGLA will make those employees available to be used by the American Red Cross in the event of a disaster once the County's internal needs have been met.
6. ARCGLA agrees to maintain records of all DSWs that are used during a disaster event, including dates and hours worked.

1. Point of Dispensing Management Training

In a major public health emergency, the Department of Public Health (DPH) has primary responsibility for protecting the overall health of County residents. If large numbers of people have been exposed to an infectious biological agent, DPH may

need to operate Points of Dispensing (POD) to provide medications and health evaluations rapidly to large numbers of people in a short time frame.

DPH will provide County employees with the information and training to assist with this important mission. Experience in the health sciences is not required to work at a POD, and this training would be open to all interested County employees.

Program Guidelines:

1. DPH agrees to provide this training at no cost to County departments.
2. County departments will provide their employees an opportunity to attend this training course.
3. DPH and County departments will work jointly to determine the most appropriate training facility to use for this training. The most appropriate training facility may be one that is available on-site where the employees are located.
4. Coordinators in each department will set up training sessions.
5. County departments that have had DSWs trained by DPH will make those employees available to be used by DPH in the event of a disaster once the County departments' internal needs have been met.
6. DPH agrees to maintain records of all DSWs that are used during a disaster event, including dates and hours worked.

2. Local Assistance Center Management Training

OEM is the primary organization responsible for the provision of managerial and logistical support for Local Assistance Centers (LAC) established throughout the County following disasters. LACs provide essential services and information to victims of disasters. Federal, State, and local governments participate in LAC operations, including the FEMA, Small Business Administration, and various County departments, as appropriate.

Following a disaster, County employee DSWs may serve to support LAC operations. Recognizing this opportunity, OEM will develop a 4-hour LAC training course for County employee DSWs. This program seeks to provide OEM with the human resources it will need to effectively fulfill its mission of providing managerial and logistical support for LACs.

Program Guidelines:

1. OEM agrees to provide this training at no cost to County Departments, usually in classes of 30 employees per session.
2. County Departments will provide their employees an opportunity to attend training course.
3. OEM and County Departments will work jointly to determine the most appropriate training facility to use for this training. The most appropriate training facility may be one that is available on-site where the employees are located. OEM has training facilities that can be used if necessary.
4. Coordinators in each Department will set up training sessions.
5. County Departments that have had DSWs trained by OEM will make those employees available to be used by OEM in the event of a disaster, once the County Departments internal needs have been met.
6. OEM agrees to maintain records of all DSWs that are used during a disaster event, including dates and hours worked.

Training Re-certification

- Part 1 - DSW Awareness Training does not have to be re-certified.
- Part 2 - DSW Emergency Management Basics (A, B, or C) training must be re-certified every five years.
- Part 3 - Other Training
 - Shelter Management Training will require re-certification at the discretion of the Red Cross.
 - POD Management Training will require re-certification at the discretion of the DPH.
 - LAC Management Training will require re-certification every five years. A Refresher Course (1 hour) will be required annually.
- All Re-certification must be documented.