

GREATER NEW JERSEY ANNUAL CONFERENCE DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN

⁴⁰ *Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.*

¹¹ *Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.*

¹² *Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.*

¹³ *Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality*" Romans 12:10-13

Our Conference Disaster Response Plan is designed to be a living document. It serves as a guide - for the conference, districts, local churches, clergy and all those who find themselves within our annual conference - to plan for, respond to and recover from a disastrous event. The Conference Disaster Response Committee (CDRC) on a yearly basis will evaluate, practice, and critique the plan. Any additions, deletions, and updates without financial implications will be made by the committee and shared with the Annual Conference.

PURPOSE

1. To prepare, coordinate and implement a conference-wide disaster response
2. To resource and equip local United Methodist churches and districts as they assist their communities and individuals to prepare, respond and recover from disaster.
3. To provide immediate relief for human need and to respond to the suffering of persons in our communities caused by natural or unnatural disasters.
4. To work cooperatively with faith-based and other non-profit organizations, and with governmental disaster response agencies in planning and implementing disaster response ministries on behalf of the Greater NJ Conference of the United Methodist Church.

WHAT IS A DISASTER? A disaster is an event that negatively affects life, property, livelihood or industry, often resulting in permanent changes to human societies, ecosystems and environment. "Natural or civil disasters are interruptions of such magnitude that they overwhelm a community's ability to recover on its own."¹⁴ Not all disasters which overwhelm a community's ability to respond are "declared".² While disaster response may rise to the county, state, regional or federal levels, disasters are always experienced "locally".

THE FIVE STAGES OF A DISASTER

Readiness	Peace time, no active disaster occurring or responding to. Development of a disaster plan. Training and equipping teams. Making preparations and taking precautions for potential events (evacuation).
Rescue	This is the time for first responders to do what they do best: please stay out of the way of public responders that are working towards the preservation of life and property, and other emergency response activities. The Conference Disaster Response Ministries will not be active during this stage
Relief	Includes crisis intervention, emergency assistance, shelter and housing, food and clothing
Recovery	Rehab and rebuild structures and lives. Helping to adjust to the "new normal"
Review	Following all the stages of a disaster, all are encouraged to learn and grow from the disaster experience.

DISASTER TIMELINE "Rule of Ten" It is important to note that, in general, if the rescue stage lasts 1 day, the typical relief stage will last 10 days and then the recovery stage will last 100 days. Disaster ministry continues long after the media, fire trucks, and ambulances have gone home.

GENERAL STRUCTURE The CDRC is structured to develop, assist, and implement a comprehensive disaster plan for the GNJAC. This committee is composed of clergy and laity. There is interaction and coordination between the CDRC and other conference agencies, boards and leadership. Leading this committee is the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator. There will be a variety of roles and responsibilities within the CDRC that will be established and implemented prior to and at the time of an event.

¹<http://new.gbgm-umc.org/umcor/work/emergencies/>

² UMCOR training PPT, pg 35

Each district will have a District Disaster Response Coordinator who is part of the CDRC. Within each district, a specific disaster preparedness and disaster response plan should be established and reviewed with its constituents. The CDRC can be a resource to assist with the plan development. Each church will have a Local Church Disaster Response Coordinator. Within each local church, a specific disaster preparedness and disaster response plan should be drafted and tested. Here again, the CDRC can be a resource with plan development.

RESPONSIBILITIES Disaster preparedness and response can be very specific for each event and location. However, here are responsibilities that are common for most situations.

I. EVERYONE regardless of your role or position

- a. Readiness
 - i. Develop your own family's disaster plan
 - 1. Create an emergency kit (check Red Cross for suggested list and procedures)
 - ii. Become familiar with your own local church disaster plan
 - iii. Become familiar with the Conference Disaster Response Plan
 - iv. Determine a your primary and secondary rally points in the event of an evacuation. Communicate this information to all of your family members.
 - v. Provide security for important documents and electronic files
 - vi. Determine how will you communicate with others and have contact names and numbers available
 - vii. When a disaster is imminent:
 - 1. If you need to evacuate, inform someone of where you are going and how to communicate with you
 - 2. If safe, assist in mitigation of damage
- b. Rescue
 - i. Be safe, don't be a hero! Let the emergency personnel do their job.
- c. Relief
 - i. Assess damage to personal home and family members.
 - ii. Assist in safely securing property from further damage as you are able
 - iii. Take pictures of damaged property before undertaking any repairs, and prior to attaching tarps or cleaning up debris or mold. Do not undertake repairs until after the insurance inspection.
 - iv. Ask for help as needed / register for disaster relief and recovery programs

II. LOCAL PASTOR/CLERGY

- a. Readiness
 - i. Talk with your congregation about disaster preparedness
 - ii. Become familiar with the district and conference disaster plans
 - iii. Work with congregation and local church disaster response coordinator to develop local church disaster response plan
 - 1. Include in the plan both the protection of people and property. Consider how you can offer ministry before, during, and after a disaster
 - 2. Identify and develop a part of your plan to care for all professing and constituent members of the congregation with special attention to the most vulnerable individuals and families
 - 3. Determine how to best secure the church buildings and parsonage to mitigate damage
 - iv. Communicate with the District Coordinator; inform him/her of the scope of your plans and the availability of your church to help in a disaster that might occur outside of your local community
 - v. Receive disaster readiness and response training and encourage your congregation to do the same
 - vi. Be sure you have personal insurance information with you. NOTE: Please be advised that the conference insurance plan does not cover your personal property
 - vii. When a disaster is imminent:
 - 1. If you have to evacuate, inform your District Superintendent and a local church leader that you are evacuating, where you are going, and how to communicate with you during and immediately after the evacuation
 - 2. If safe, assist in mitigation of damage
- b. Rescue
 - i. Be safe, don't be a hero! Let the emergency personnel do their job.
 - ii. As possible, communicate with the membership.
 - iii. If you are not properly trained, it may not be safe to offer assistance to others at this point. Your safety and that of your family comes first.

- c. Relief
 - i. Assess damage to personal home and family members. If you have suffered loss or injury, listen and use outside judgment. Notify the fact of being affected to Chair of SPRC, Chair of Trustees, and District Superintendent as soon as possible.
 - ii. As soon as possible, conduct an initial on-site assessment of church buildings and property with Chair of Trustees and communicate damage with District Disaster Response Coordinator and District Superintendent.
 - iii. Identify someone who is capable of safely securing church property to prevent further damage.
 - iv. Assess the needs of the community. If members of your congregation are able and prepared to help in ministry under the leadership of trained volunteers, safely begin. For assistance contact your District Disaster Response Coordinator.
 - 1. Within the community concentrate on BASIC needs-food, shelter, cleaning-out homes of debris or mud, securing homes from further damage (e.g. tarping structures) (**FYI**-This may be a health risk is not conducted properly. It can also lead to masking hidden damage),
 - 2. Be the pastoral presence in the community that you are called to be. However, do not proselytize. (For more information, see the National VOAD Emotional and Spiritual Care Points of Consensus at www.nvoad.org)
- d. Recovery
 - i. Engage with the local community's long term recovery group
 - ii. Keep the District Superintendent and the District Disaster Response Coordinator informed of the recovery effort
 - iii. Resume pastoral duties as soon as possible
 - iv. Provide directional assistance for volunteer teams
 - v. Consider ways the local church can support the recovery effort
 - vi. Plan for church and ecumenical opportunities to celebrate milestones in recovery
- e. Review
 - i. Gather with the leadership of the congregation-thank them for their ministry and assess the local church's plan and response post-disaster

III. **LOCAL CHURCH**

- a. Readiness
 - i. Develop a local church disaster response plan, review it annually
 - ii. Encourage families to develop a personal disaster plan
 - iii. Board of Trustees should annually review insurance coverage, provide a safe repository of valuable records, and inventory church property and contents.
 - iv. Consider if and how your church buildings and property will be used before, during, and after a disaster. Preplanning and pre-agreements can save much time, financial resources, and insurance liabilities. The Conference Disaster Response Committee is available to be a resource for you.
 - v. Develop a means of communication with all members and constituents of the congregation
 - vi. Decide if your local church is willing to be a shelter. If so, have your facility pre-approved as a shelter by the Red Cross.
 - vii. When a disaster is imminent:
 - 1. Board of Trustees should make sure that ALL church owned buildings and properties have been secured so as to assist in mitigation of damage
 - 2. Communicate with the membership-if they are evacuating, where are they going and how will the church be able to communicate with them
- b. Rescue
 - i. Be safe, don't be a hero! Let the emergency personnel do their job.
 - ii. Do not open as a shelter without prior approval and or direction by the Red Cross
- c. Relief
 - i. As soon as possible conduct an initial on-site assessment of church buildings and property with at least the pastor and Chair of Trustees present. Communicate damage with District Disaster Response Coordinator and District Superintendent.
 - ii. Communicate with the congregation membership, assess their needs, and provide assistance as you are able.
 - iii. Assess the needs of the community. If your congregation is able to help in ministry safely begin-if you need assistance contact your District Coordinator. Within the community concentrate on BASIC needs-food, shelter, drying of homes.

- iv. Take pictures of damaged property before undertaking any repairs, and prior to attaching tarps or cleaning up debris or mold. The church should not undertake repairs until after the insurance inspection.
- v. Keep detailed records of disaster response and disaster funds received and spent
- d. Recovery
 - i. Engage with the long term recovery group; identify resources that the local church may be able to provide, or to acquire through connectional ministries
 - ii. Keep the District Superintendent and District Disaster Response Coordinator informed of the recovery effort
 - iii. Resume church ministries
 - iv. Keep detailed records of disaster response and disaster funds received and spent
 - v. Provide facility assistance / hospitality for work teams as resources allow and as approved by the congregation
 - vi. Participate in local community recovery closeout process
- e. Review
 - i. Share lessons learned/best practices with District Superintendent and District Coordinator
 - ii. Review your local church plan, and revise as necessary

IV. DISTRICT DISASTER RESPONSE COORDINATOR

- a. Readiness
 - i. The District DRC is the communication liaison between the District Office, local church disaster coordinator and the specific disaster response ministry.
 - ii. Make your presence known among the local churches and let the local churches know how to communicate with you
 - iii. Develop with the District Superintendent a district disaster response plan-with attention to communication
 - iv. Attend meetings of the Conference Disaster Response Committee
 - v. Attend trainings and encourage others to do the same; suggest disaster training opportunities and venues for training in the district
 - vi. When a disaster is imminent:
 - 1. If you have to evacuate, inform your District Superintendent and the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator that you are evacuating, where you are going, and how to communicate with you during and immediately after the evacuation
 - 2. If safe, assist in mitigation of damage
- b. Rescue
 - i. Be safe, don't be a hero! Let the emergency personnel do their job.
- c. Relief
 - i. Assess damage to personal home and family members. If you have suffered loss or injury, listen and use outside judgment. Notify the fact that you affected to your District Superintendent and the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
 - ii. Take pictures of damaged property before undertaking any repairs, and prior to attaching tarps or cleaning up debris or mold. Do not undertake repairs until after the insurance inspection.
 - iii. Communicate with pastors/local churches in affected areas in your district Assist with initial assessments as requested
 - iv. Communicate with the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator of needs and of damage to church-owned buildings and properties within your district
 - v. If your district is not affected, your district may be called upon to assist with the districts that have been impacted
 - vi. Communicate with the Conference Early Response Team Coordinator to help in the deployment of early Response Teams as needed and requested.
- d. Recovery
 - i. When an affected area transitions into long term recovery, the focus of the district disaster response coordinator may shift toward review, planning and preparation
 - ii. Participate in the closeout process as requested.
 - iii. Communicate remaining unmet needs with the Conference DRC
- e. Review
 - i. Be intentional about communicating thanks to those who have provided aid to your district
 - ii. Review the district disaster readiness and response plan, and amend as needed
 - iii. Participate in the review of the Conference Disaster Response Plan

V. DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

- a. Readiness
 - i. Be trained by UMCOR regarding Conference disaster response ministries
 - ii. Prepare communication procedures between clergy, Local Church disaster Response Coordinators, and District Office.
 - iii. Communicate the work of the Conference Disaster Response Committee to the local laity and clergy
 - iv. Appoint a District Disaster Response Coordinator in consultation with the Conference Disaster Response Committee. Please take into consideration the time investment necessary in disaster readiness and disaster response. The role may be filled by laity or clergy.
 - v. When a disaster is imminent:
 1. If you have to evacuate, inform the Dean of the Cabinet and the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator that you are evacuating, where you are going, and how to communicate with you during and immediately following the evacuation
 2. If safe, assist in mitigation of damage
- b. Rescue
 - i. Be safe, don't be a hero! Let the emergency personnel do their job.
- c. Relief
 - i. Assess damage to personal home and family members. If you have suffered loss or injury, listen and use outside judgment. Notify the fact of being affected to the Dean of Cabinet and Conference Disaster Response Coordinator.
 - ii. If the parsonage has suffered damage, take pictures of damaged property before undertaking any repairs, and prior to attaching tarps or cleaning up debris. Do not undertake repairs until after the insurance inspection. Notify your liaison to the Conference Board of Trustees of damage sustained.
 - iii. Contact pastors in affected areas to assess physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of the clergy, clergy families, and congregations.
 - iv. As soon as safe and physically possible visit the affected areas with the Bishop
 - v. If a pastor has been directly affected by the disaster, a Supply Pastor may be appointed immediately for one or two months
 - vi. Visit affected areas as often as possible with and without the Bishop
 - vii. If pastor/s are likely to be overwhelmed by church and community duties during the disaster response, appoint a temporary Assisting Pastor to provide an extra pair of hands
 - viii. Watch for 'burn-out' on all levels within the conference
 - ix. Encourage unaffected churches to share resources
 - x. Use the authority of your office to ask people to do certain tasks
- d. Recovery
 - i. Communicate local needs to conference
 - ii. Encourage local churches to volunteer
 - iii. Communicate with the Disaster Recovery any unmet needs that arise or areas that may need additional resources or assistance
 - iv. Periodically assess well-being of pastors in affected areas. Consider pulpit supply or other forms of support as needed.
 - v. Support and or assist in celebrating milestones in recovery
- e. Review
 - i. Be intentional about communicating thanks to those who provided aid to your district
 - ii. Participate in the closeout evaluation from the Disaster in the District
 - iii. Participate in post-disaster evaluation and the need for possible plan revision

VI. CONFERENCE DISASTER RESPONSE COORDINATOR

- a. Readiness
 - i. Communicate the work of the Conference Disaster Response Committee to the Conference, Districts, local churches and clergy.
 - ii. Foster partnerships with other volunteer agencies that are active after a disaster and other emergency organizations
 - iii. Have a minimum of two other people on standby to fill your duties if you are unavailable
 - iv. Ensure discussion of a business continuity plan for the conference
 - v. Plan appropriate disaster trainings-UMCOR is a resource
 - vi. Work with District Superintendents to identify appropriate individuals to serve as District Disaster Response Coordinators

- vii. When a disaster is imminent:
 - 1. If you have to evacuate, inform the Director of Connectional Ministries and/or a member of the Conference Disaster Response Committee that you are evacuating, where you are going, and how to communicate with you during the evacuation
 - 2. If safe, assist in mitigation of damage
- b. Rescue
 - i. Be safe, don't be a hero! Let the emergency personnel do their job.
- c. Relief
 - i. Assess damage to personal home and family members. If you have suffered loss or injury, listen and use outside judgment. Notify the fact of being affected to the Director of Connectional Ministries and/or a member of the Conference Disaster Response Committee.
 - ii. Work closely with Conference Communications to publicize disaster-related needs.
 - iii. Issue a call for Early Response Teams, from within the conference, as needed and determined by the appropriate individuals.
 - iv. Issue a call for Early Response Teams, from other the conferences, as needed and determined by the appropriate individuals and approved by the Bishop
 - v. Serve as the Disaster Coordinator until the needs arise to delegate the task to someone else.
 - vi. Visit the affect areas with the District Superintendent and Bishop, as soon as safe and possible.
 - vii. Coordinate with the Bishop if an invitation for assistance needs to be made to UMOCR
- d. Recovery
 - i. Work with ongoing disaster recovery efforts providing support as needed.
 - ii. Work with Bishop to have all involved leaders meet for reports and evaluation.
- e. Review
 - i. Participate in post-action evaluation and Plan revision
 - ii. Work with Bishop to publicly acknowledge workers and work done.
 - iii. Lead a review of the Plan with the CDRC annually and after each disaster.
 - iv. Maintain communication with UMCOR and inform of lessons learned and best practices

VII. DIRECTOR OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES

- a. Readiness
 - i. Work with Conference Disaster Response Committee
 - ii. Have a minimum of two other people on standby to fill your duties if you are unavailable
 - iii. When a disaster is imminent:
 - 1. If you have to evacuate, inform the Dean of the Cabinet and/or the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator that you are evacuating, where you are going, and how to communicate with you during the evacuation
 - 2. If safe, assist in mitigation of damage
- b. Rescue
 - i. Be safe, don't be a hero! Let the emergency personnel do their job.
- c. Relief
 - i. Assess damage to personal home and family members. If you have suffered loss or injury, listen to and use outside judgment. Notify the fact of being a affected to Dean of Cabinet and/or Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
 - ii. As soon as possible and safe visit the affected area with the District Superintendent, Bishop, and Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
 - iii. Make certain that conference communications is involved and remains involved
 - iv. Make office space available to the disaster response effort, if possible. The telephone team and others will need an area. (An effective telephone team will make your work much easier.) If it is located in the Conference Center, response personnel will need access to the building for more time than your usual business hours. Disaster response is not an eight-hour day task.
 - v. Be aware of the length of time relief takes. Continue to remind the Conference that relief is still needed.
 - vi. Encourage the Conference to give financial and personal help.
 - vii. Remember that it cannot be business as usual!
- d. Recovery
 - i. Work with ongoing disaster recovery efforts providing support as needed.
 - ii. Be aware of the length of time recovery takes. Continue to remind the Conference that recovery is still going on.
 - iii. Encourage the Conference to give financial and personal help.
- e. Review
 - i. Work with Bishop to have all involved leaders meet for reports and evaluation.

- ii. Participate in the closeout process.
- iii. Participate in post-action evaluation and Plan revision.

VIII. RESIDENT BISHOP

- a. Readiness
 - i. Have cabinet trained by UMCOR at least every four years
 - ii. Support the ministry of Disaster Response and encourage District Superintendents to support this ministry as well.
 - iii. Appoint a Conference Disaster Response Coordinator that will serve at least four years.
 - iv. Appoint the Conference staff person that will serve on the Disaster Response Committee.
 - v. Include the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator on the Cabinet and other leadership meetings throughout the year for interaction and education.
 - vi. Inform whoever acts on your behalf that when the Bishop is out of the office, the person in charge has a responsibility to implement the response plan when disaster strikes, including contacting UMCOR for assistance. (Only the Bishop or designee can make this request.)
 - vii. When a disaster is imminent:
 - 1. If you have to evacuate, inform the Dean of the Cabinet and/or the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator that you are evacuating, where you are going, and how to communicate with you during the evacuation
 - 2. If safe, assist in mitigation of damage
- b. Rescue
 - i. Be safe, don't be a hero! Let the emergency personnel do their job.
- c. Relief
 - i. Assess damage to personal home and family members. If you have suffered loss or injury, listen to and use outside judgment. Notify the fact of being affected to the Dean of Cabinet and Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
 - ii. In conjunction with the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator, request assistance from UMCOR, as needed.
 - iii. As soon as safe and possible visit the affected areas with the local District Superintendent and the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
 - iv. Remember you are the spiritual leader of the conference, lead the conference through the disaster spiritually
 - v. Be in communication with all the District Superintendents and Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
 - vi. Appointments: As needed temporary appointments/changes in appointment might be needed. As needed, immediately appoint a Supply Pastor for any clergy who have and are suffering loss of injury as a result of the disaster. Appoint temporary Assisting Pastors, when needed to any charges which have been impacted. If the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator is a pastor, you may need to appoint a Supply Pastor for at least one month to relieve the pastor of local church duties. Appoint a temporary Assisting District Superintendent to those regions that are hardest hit, especially if there is significant church property damage. If you have suffered loss or injury, see that you too, have an assistant who can share your load
 - vii. Consider a conference-wide financial appeal and implement as soon as possible. There is roughly a two-week window for this
 - viii. Remember that it cannot be business as usual!
- d. Recovery
 - i. Understand that the recovery ministry is long lasting and still continuing. Your support of this ministry is very important
 - ii. Plan for a service of praise and memorial a year from the date of the disaster
- e. Review
 - i. Publicly acknowledge workers and work done.
 - ii. Participate in post-action evaluation and Plan revision
 - iii. Have all involved leaders meet for reports and evaluation.

CONFERENCE TREASURER'S OFFICE The conference treasurer and/or staff will assist the CDRC in keeping track of and dispensing funds for disaster relief while following UMCOR and conference standards.

CONCLUSION This plan serves as the guide to prepare, respond, and recover from a disaster that could strike our homes, churches and communities. With its implementation we begin to coordinate our efforts as the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference to deal with the next disaster.

Looking ahead the CDRC will be assessing the needs of the Greater New Jersey area and the gifts that we as United Methodists can offer and weave into the fabric of disaster response. We recognize that coordinating our efforts with other agencies we can best serve those in need.

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DISASTER COMMUNICATION CHART

If you have to evacuate, you will need to inform someone of **where you are going** and **how to communicate** with you. If there is a utility outage, cell phones may not be able to be charged. Those with phone service that is through a modem may also lose service during a power outage.

<u>PERSON AFFECTED</u>	<u>FIRST CONTACT</u>	<u>SECOND CONTACT</u>
Local Pastor/Clergy	District Superintendent	Local Church Leader
Local Church	Local Church Leaders (SPR, Trustee Pres., etc)	Membership
*District Disaster Response Coordinator	District Superintendent	Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
District Superintendent	Dean of the Cabinet	Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
*Conference Disaster Response Coordinator	Director of Connectional Ministries	Member of CDRC
Director of Connectional Ministries	Dean of the Cabinet	Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
Resident Bishop	Dean of the Cabinet	Conference Disaster Response Coordinator

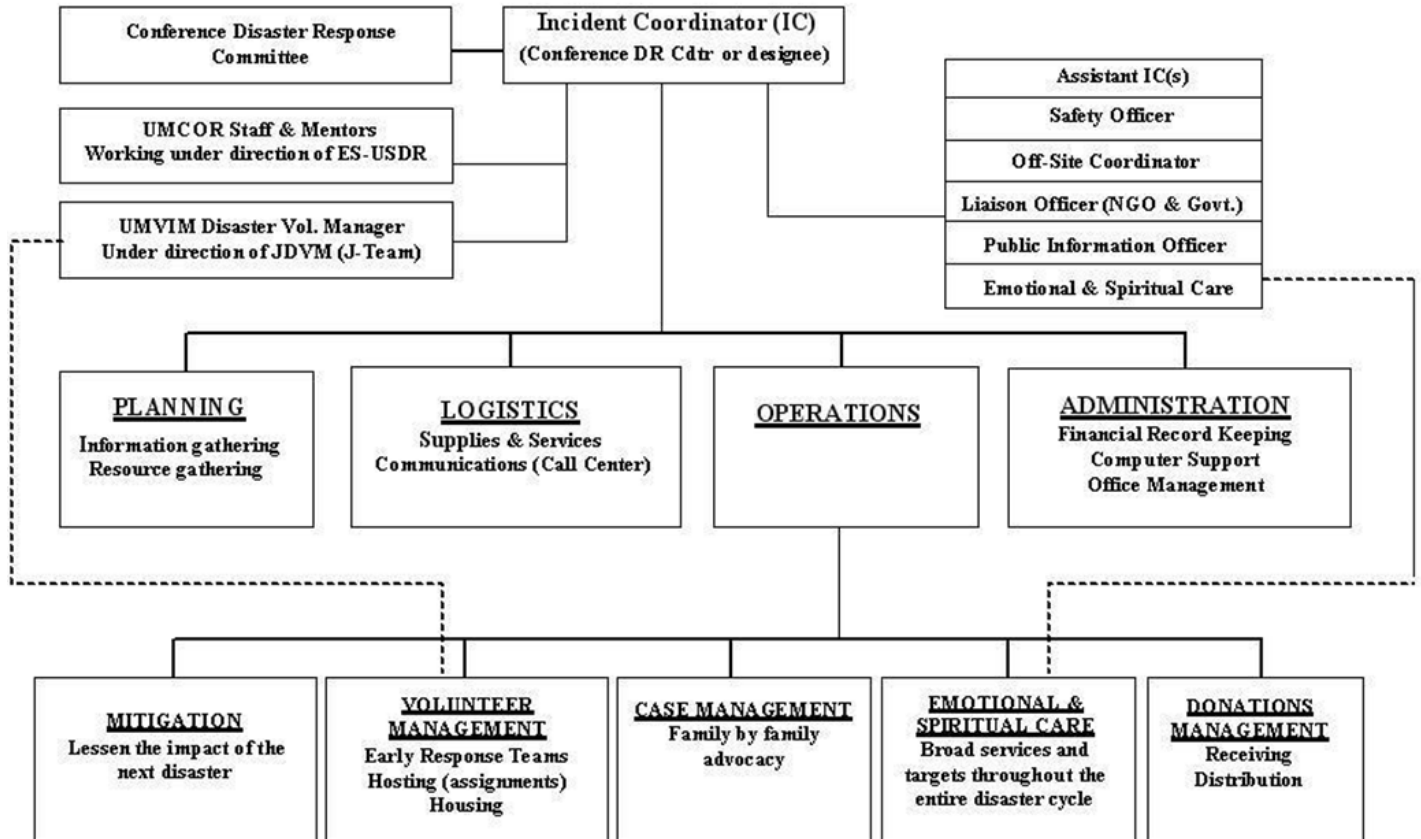
*If a clergy member is serving in these positions it requires contacting those under local pastor/clergy

*After reviewing the Disaster Communication Chart,
It is strongly recommended that you take the time now and fill out the following areas with the names and phone numbers that you will need*

_____	_____	_____
Personal Info	First Contact Name and Phone Number	Second Contact Name and Phone Number

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR RELIEF STAGE RESPONSE The following flow chart will be used for guidance when we are active during the relief stage of a disaster. This chart utilizes the National Incident Management System (NIMS) which FEMA, First Responders, UMCOR, and other agencies also use. It is understood that every disaster is local and unique, and as such this chart will need to flex pending the situation.

**Organizational Structure for Relief Stage
Incident Coordination System (ICS)
Chart of full-scale Operation**



Please take *FREE* courses pre-disaster: <http://training.fema.gov/IS/NIMS.asp>
 Recommended courses and ordering: IS-800.b, IS-700.a, IS-100.b, IS200.b