

AIRS- UWA National Disaster Response Team

In April 2006, Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS) and United Way of America (UWA) agreed to jointly develop, recruit for, train and manage a Disaster Response Team consisting of trained professionals who could establish or supplement a call center during times of disaster and provide training to the field during non-disaster times.

News of the creation of the team was announced at the 2006 AIRS Conference and UWA's Leadership Conference and recruitment began to establish an interim Response Team while training was developed and funding was secured.

This program has been funded in part by the AIRS Board and by UPS through their United Way of America partnership.

Disaster Response Team Positions

Volunteer Management Professional

The importance of a volunteer management position in times of disaster is to coordinate the volunteers on a local, regional or national level. The volunteer manager would also recruit for a virtual call center supporting the 2-1-1 system. This position is imperative to responding to surge demand for specific specialties within the 2-1-1 system.

Mental Health Professional

The importance of a Mental Health Professional in times of disaster is to support staff working in the 2-1-1 system during times of disaster. This position will monitor the stress of the incoming demands on the staff and provide debriefing after the event. This position will help blend the tasks of traditional information and referral and crisis counselors in times of disaster.

Telecommunications Professional

The importance of a Telecommunications Professional during times of disaster is to assist with technical aspects needed in time of disaster with issues which may include routing, equipment and capacity. The telecommunications specialist may interact with the telecommunications industry.

Disaster Resource/Data Professional

The importance of a Resource/Data Professional in times of disaster is to identify, collect, verify and disseminate fluid information.

Disaster Call Center Information & Referral Professional

The importance of experienced Disaster Call Center Information & Referral Professionals in times of disaster is to utilize the practical skills previously learned to supplement existing organizational staff.

Public Relations/Communications Professional

The importance of a Public Relations/Communications Professional in times of disaster is to deal with the different requests for information in a timely, accurate and appropriate manner.

Emergency Operations Center Professional

The importance of an Emergency Operations Center Professional in times of disaster is to represent the Call Center at the Emergency Operations Center.

Logistics Professional

The importance of a Logistics Professional in times of disaster is to insure that necessary resources are in place to support the Call Center operations.

Disaster Call Center Management Professional

The importance of an experienced Disaster Call Center Management Professional in times of disaster is to utilize the practical skills previously learned to supplement existing organizational staff.

Training Professional

The importance of a Resource/Data Professional in times of disaster is to provide training to insure competency with equipment and procedures related to working in a Call Center.

Crisis Call Center Professional

The importance of a Crisis Call Center Professional in times of disaster is that a significant percentage of callers are experiencing some degree of crisis. This is beyond the traditional scope of service in most callers in non-disaster situations. The professional would train and assist with triage measures as well as caller intervention as appropriate.

Trainings will be made available through both UWA and AIRS national, regional and state conferences and through partner organization training conferences, i.e. the Points of Light Foundation (POLF), AIRS online training portal and UWA hosted webinars.

For questions about this team, or to engage the team during a disaster in your community, please contact:

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