

## Volunteer Safety and Litigation Avoidance Resources

Resource/Document	Description
<p>Citizen Corps Volunteer Liability Guide: An Overview of Legal Issues and Approaches to Address Liability for Emergency Volunteers</p>	<p>Well-trained volunteers supplement emergency responders in a variety of ways, and liability is a concern of many in these roles. Liability is also a potential barrier to volunteer involvement in emergency services. This liability guide covers a broad range of topics that impact liability and offers real-world examples of how legal responsibility is handled regarding emergency volunteers. Some of these topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legally imposed payment of damages for personal injury or property damage;</li> <li>• Penalties for practicing a profession or trade without the required license or permit;</li> <li>• Compensation for lost income and medical expenses of an injured volunteer; and</li> <li>• Damages for breach of contract.</li> </ul> <p>To offer guidance in this area, FEMA funded the nonprofit Public Entity Risk Institute (PERI) to develop the Citizen Corps Volunteer Liability Guide (CCVLG) to provide an overview of liability and suggest some approaches to addressing these concerns.</p> <p>PERI's liability guide is available for download at <a href="http://www.citizencorps.gov/downloads/pdf/Citizen_Corps_Volunteer_Liability_Guide.pdf">http://www.citizencorps.gov/downloads/pdf/Citizen_Corps_Volunteer_Liability_Guide.pdf</a></p>
<p>State Liability Laws for Charitable Organizations and Volunteers</p>	<p>State liability laws have evolved in response to various issues confronting charitable organizations and volunteers. State laws may address protection of Good Samaritans and other volunteers, volunteer immunity, liability limitation, shield laws, and charitable immunity.</p> <p>A publication compiled by the Nonprofit Risk Management Center helps to answer many of the liability questions volunteer organizations face. This publication, <i>State Liability Laws for Charitable Organizations and Volunteers – 4<sup>th</sup> Edition</i>, overviews the variety of laws in this field and presents a compendium of each State's laws. Because coverage varies from State to State, consult your jurisdiction's/organization's legal counsel with any specific questions.</p> <p>The Center's publication is available for download at <a href="http://www.nonprofitrisk.org/library/state-liability.shtml">http://www.nonprofitrisk.org/library/state-liability.shtml</a></p>

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<p>Managing Spontaneous Volunteers in Times of Disaster: The Synergy of Structure and Good Intentions</p>	<p>When disaster—natural or human-caused—strikes a community, specific emergency management and nonprofit organizations respond according to a pre-established plan. Each of these designated organizations has a particular role to play in ensuring an effective response to and recovery from the disaster’s devastation.</p> <p>However, one element within the present system continues to pose a challenge: spontaneous, unaffiliated volunteers. Spontaneous, unaffiliated volunteers—our neighbors and ordinary citizens—often arrive onsite at a disaster ready to help. Yet because they are not associated with any part of the existing emergency management response system, their offers of help are often underutilized by professional responders. The challenge is clear: people’s willingness to volunteer must be successfully channeled by the system’s capacity to utilize them effectively. This publication focuses on how best to channel the positive energy and contributions of spontaneous volunteers.</p> <p>This free 20-page FEMA publication can be accessed at: <a href="http://www.fema.gov/pdf/donations/ManagingSpontaneousVolunteers.pdf">http://www.fema.gov/pdf/donations/ManagingSpontaneousVolunteers.pdf</a></p>
<p>Community Preparedness Toolkit</p>	<p>The Community Preparedness Toolkit provides step-by-step directions along with useful resources for making your community, safer, more resilient, and better prepared. The Community Preparedness Toolkit can be used to develop a community-based approach to preparedness, such as a Citizen Corps Council.</p> <p>Citizen Corps is FEMA's grassroots strategy to bring together government and community leaders to involve citizens in all-hazards emergency preparedness and resilience. Citizen Corps asks you to embrace the personal responsibility to be prepared; to get training in first aid and emergency skills; and to volunteer to support local emergency responders, disaster relief, and community safety.</p> <p>The Toolkit can be accessed at: <a href="http://www.citizencorps.gov/getstarted/toolkit/kitindex.shtm">http://www.citizencorps.gov/getstarted/toolkit/kitindex.shtm</a></p>

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Emergency Financial First Aid Kit (EFFAK)	<p>Research shows that while 71% of households reported having copies of important financial documents in a safe place, only 1% specifically mentioned the documents as being part of their household disaster supplies. Only 2% of households reported having cash as part of their disaster preparedness supplies. Pre-disaster financial planning is essential for individuals and families to complete because disasters leave many Americans without access to finances and/or with expensive damages.</p> <p>The Emergency Financial First Aid Kit (EFFAK) is a simple tool designed to assist you and your family in being financially prepared before a disaster strikes and maintaining financial stability in the event of an emergency. EFFAK helps you to identify and organize key financial records and provides a quick reference file for your most important financial documents. One kit per household is recommended, although in the event one kit is used for a couple, all joint and separate accounts and liabilities should be included.</p> <p><a href="http://www.citizencorps.gov/downloads/pdf/ready/EFFAK_2010_FEMA.pdf">http://www.citizencorps.gov/downloads/pdf/ready/EFFAK_2010_FEMA.pdf</a></p>

These and other valuable resources are available for download from the Citizen Corps Web site: <http://www.citizencorps.gov/>