

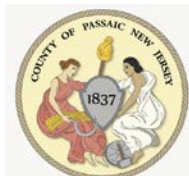
Memorandum of Understanding

between the

American Red Cross

and

**Passaic County's
Department of Human Services**



I. Purpose

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is to define a working relationship between The American Red Cross (hereinafter "Red Cross") and Passaic County's Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Disaster Response Crisis Counselors Unit (hereinafter PC-DRCC) in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters. This MOU provides a broad framework for cooperation and support between the Red Cross and PC-DRCC in assisting individuals, families and communities who have been or could be impacted by disaster or an emergency. It also provides descriptions of readiness and response activities, such as planning, training, exercising and resourcing, and the clarification of roles and responsibilities of the Red Cross and PC-DRCC to the community and other agencies.

II. Parties

A. Passaic County DRCC

The New Jersey Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (NJ DMHAS) operates a unit called "Disaster and Terrorism Branch". During a federally declared disaster, this unit is responsible for activating the state's mental health disaster response plan in coordination with other emergency departments. Every county also has such a plan and maintains a list of Disaster Response Crisis Counselors (DRCCs) who are trained volunteers and can assist during an emergency.

New Jersey is one of the first states to certify its behavioral health responders in preparation for response to disasters and traumatic events. The development of a cadre of paraprofessionals and professionals enhances the capability of activating a timely and effective behavioral health response. A DRCC is a volunteer who becomes part of an Emergency Response Network and responds to the needs of communities in the event that a disaster strikes. The DRCCs are trained in disaster response, disaster behavioral health and crisis counseling, among other topics and they collaborate with the various response partners who participate in the statewide emergency response network. The DRCC does not need to have a clinical background as the crisis counseling program does not provide clinical mental health services.

B. American Red Cross

Founded in 1881, the Red Cross is the nation's largest nonprofit disaster management organization. As part of a worldwide movement that offers neutral and impartial humanitarian care, the Red Cross is a non-governmental organization that mobilizes communities to aid people affected by or at risk of disasters with the aim of preventing and alleviating suffering. We do this by recruiting, training, and equipping volunteers throughout the country. The Red Cross provides disaster cycle services without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, citizenship or veteran status. It follows the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement [See Attachment B]. The Red Cross is closely integrated into community preparedness, response, and recovery efforts, including those of federal, tribal, state and local government and other non-government organizations.

The Red Cross is chartered by the United States Congress to provide humanitarian services and provides disaster cycle services pursuant to its Bylaws and other internal policies and procedures as well as its Congressional Charter (USC 36 §300101-300111). In the Charter, Congress authorized the Red Cross "to carry out a system of national and international relief in time of peace and apply that system in mitigating the suffering caused by pestilence, famine, fire, floods, and other great national calamities, and to devise and carry out measures for preventing those calamities."

Further, the 2020 Memorandum of Agreement between FEMA and the Red Cross recognizes the national level roles and responsibilities designated to the Red Cross. Located in Washington, DC, the national headquarters for the Red Cross is responsible for implementing policies and procedures that govern such Red Cross activities and provides administrative and technical oversight and guidance. Additionally, each region has certain authorities and responsibilities for carrying out Red Cross disaster preparedness, response and recovery activities, delivering local Red Cross services, and meeting corporate obligations within the territorial jurisdiction assigned to it. Each region is familiar with the hazards of the locality and surveys local resources for personnel, equipment, supplies, transportation, emergency communications, and facilities available for disaster relief. Regions also formulate cooperative plans and procedures with local government agencies and private organizations for relief activities should a disaster occur.

III. Methods of Cooperation

The Red Cross and PC-DRCC mutually recognize each other's authority in the emergency management/disaster response field to prepare, respond and recover from disasters. Accordingly, both parties will share strategic, tactical and crisis communication objectives. Both parties will also share operational plans, priorities and objectives. PC-DRCC recognizes the Red Cross as having mass care responsibility in domestic disasters, and when activated, will support and coordinate with the Red Cross in the execution of these duties.

As the ESF-6 Supporting agency, the Red Cross will coordinate with PC-DRCC on their respective disaster cycle activities to enhance services to the community in the following areas:

1. Preparedness activities – Build community capacity and resilience through disaster preparedness within Passaic County, including:
 - a. Community education activities (e.g. Home Fire Campaign, Prepare with Pedro)
 - b. High probability/high consequence events risk assessment
 - c. Planning (e.g. emergency plans, standard operating procedures for notification of disaster and emergency situations)
 - d. Training (e.g. Red Cross disaster trainings, FEMA classroom trainings hosted by Passaic County)
 - e. Exercise (e.g. Shelter Fundamentals, National Level Exercise, National Mass Care)
2. Response activities – Organize community resources to meet the immediate needs of individuals, families and communities affected by disaster or emergencies, including the following life-sustaining services:

- a. Daily Home Fire Response Services (e.g. DAT response)
 - b. Sheltering (e.g. managing shelters, providing technical assistance in evacuation and post impact sheltering, quantifying daily shelter counts)
 - c. Feeding (e.g. in shelters, on mobile routes, at fixed sites in the impacted communities)
 - d. Health Services (e.g. shelters, Family Assistance Centers)
 - e. Mental Health Services (e.g. shelters, Family Assistance Centers)
 - f. Disability Integration (e.g. shelters, feeding sites)
 - g. Spiritual Care (e.g. shelters, Family Assistance Centers)
 - h. Reunification (e.g. Safe & Well)
 - i. Distribution of Relief Supplies (e.g. comfort kits, clean up supplies, personal hygiene items)
 - j. Damage Assessment (e.g. aggregate data, virtual, windowpane)
 - k. Mass Fatality (e.g. funeral assistance, Family Assistance Centers)
3. Recovery activities – Provide a standard and scalable set of services that align with available resources to bridge the gaps between client resources and needs, including:
- a. Client Casework (e.g. housing, financial assistance, referrals)
 - b. Community Recovery Strategy Development (e.g. Long-Term Recovery Committees, Multi-Agency Shelter Transition Teams)
 - c. FEMA’s Direct Case Management Program (e.g. the delivery of recovery services for individuals and families, the sharing of case information, the prevention of the duplication of services)

PC-DRCC can provide the following services at the request of The Red Cross and/ or Passaic County Emergency Management.

- 1. Immediate Psychological First Aid (PFA)**
 - a. Provide rapid, on-site emotional support and stabilization to disaster survivors and responders.
 - b. Establish rapport with individuals experiencing distress, ensuring safety and comfort.
- 2. Community Outreach & Engagement**
 - a. Conduct outreach in shelters, community gathering locations, and disaster assistance centers to identify individuals needing crisis support.
 - b. Disseminate informational materials, including stress management tips and guidance on coping strategies.
- 3. Needs Assessment & Triage**
 - a. Assess the immediate behavioral health needs of survivors, prioritizing individuals with severe reactions or risk factors.
 - b. Make referrals to appropriate mental health services or higher-level care when needed (e.g., psychiatric services, substance use treatment).
- 4. Supportive Crisis Counseling**
 - a. Offer short-term, strengths-based counseling interventions focused on mitigating stress responses, reducing anxiety, and building resilience.
 - b. Normalize reactions to trauma and help survivors understand common

emotional and behavioral responses.

- 5. Psychoeducation & Skill-Building**
 - a. Provide psychoeducational materials and instruction on healthy coping strategies (e.g., stress reduction techniques, relaxation exercises).
 - b. Promote self-care and help disaster survivors identify personal and community resources.
- 6. Resource Linkage & Referral**
 - a. Coordinate with local, county, state, and federal resources (including the Red Cross, FEMA, and DMHAS) to help survivors access long-term support.
 - b. Identify and facilitate connections to social services, financial assistance programs, and other local support systems.
- 7. Collaboration & Coordination**
 - a. closely with the Red Cross, Passaic County Department of Human Services, and other disaster relief agencies to ensure a unified response.
 - b. Participate in coordination meetings, briefings, and planning sessions to align crisis counseling efforts with overall disaster operations.
- 8. Monitoring & Follow-Up**
 - a. Maintain ongoing contact with high-risk individuals who need continued support or referral, ensuring a warm handoff to longer-term services.
 - b. Track and report service data, outcomes, and trends to inform future disaster response and recovery initiatives.
- 9. Cultural Competency & Accessibility**
 - a. Deliver services that are culturally sensitive, trauma-informed, and tailored to diverse populations (including different languages, ages, and special needs).
 - b. Ensure crisis counseling resources and materials are accessible to those with limited English proficiency or disabilities.
- 10. Staff Support & Training**
 - a. Provide stress management and psychoeducational support to volunteers, disaster workers, and staff, helping to mitigate burnout and secondary trauma.
 - b. Offer or facilitate training sessions on psychological first aid, self-care, and disaster mental health best practices.
- 11. Ethical & Confidential Service Delivery**
 - a. Adhere to all relevant privacy laws and regulations (e.g., HIPAA) and maintain confidentiality.
 - b. Follow professional codes of conduct and ethical guidelines to protect client rights and welfare.
- 12. Documentation & Reporting**
 - a. Accurately document services provided and maintain records in compliance with DMHAS, SAMHSA, FEMA, and other applicable standards.
 - b. Submit required reports promptly to ensure accountability and facilitate access to supplemental funding if needed.
- 13. Coordination With Ongoing Disaster Behavioral Health Programs**
 - a. Collaborate with the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) Disaster and Terrorism Branch and other relevant bodies during

active declared disasters.

- b. Transition or integrate services into Intermediate Services Program (ISP) or Regular Services Program (RSP) grants when applicable to extend support.

IV. General

1. Both parties agree to keep each other informed of the human needs created by the disaster events and the services being provided, including:
 - i. Maintaining close coordination and support at all levels and with designated Points of Contact (e.g. in appropriate committees, planning groups, task forces) [See Attachment A]
2. Both parties agree not to use or display any trademarks of the other without first receiving the express written permission to do so. However, the use of the trademarks of the other party is permitted for internal meeting notes and plans that are not publicly distributed and used during the normal course of business related to the purpose of MOU. If either party desires to use the intellectual property of the other, the “requesting party” should submit the proposed promotional/marketing materials, press releases, website displays or otherwise proposed use of the trademarks to the “owning party” for review in advance of dissemination or publication.
3. Both parties will keep the public informed of their cooperative efforts through the public information offices of the Red Cross and Passaic County and Joint Information Center, if activated.
4. Both parties will widely distribute this partnership agreement within their respective organizations and urge full cooperation.
5. Both parties will maintain their own identity in providing service. Each organization is separately responsible for establishing its own policies, procedures, and financing its own activities.
6. Both parties will abide by the Federal and State laws and regulations concerning confidentiality which safeguard information and the participants confidentiality. Both parties will further abide by all Federal and State laws and regulations as relative to data sharing of pertinent information for performance accountability and program evaluation purposes.

V. Periodic Review

The parties will, on an annual basis, on or around the anniversary date of this MOU, jointly evaluate their progress in implementing this MOU and revise and develop new plans or goals as appropriate. Both parties shall notify the other if primary points of contact change.

VI. Term and Termination.

This MOU is effective as of February 5, 2025. It expires on February 4, 2030. Six months prior to expiration, the parties will meet to review the progress and success of the cooperative effort. In connection with such review, the parties may decide to extend this MOU for an additional

period not exceeding five years, and if so, shall confirm this in a signed writing. This MOU may be terminated by written notification from either party to the other at any time and for any reason or for no reason.

VII. Miscellaneous

This MOU does not create a partnership or a joint venture and does not create any financial commitments from one party to the other. Neither party has the authority to bind the other to any obligation. It is not intended that this MOU be enforceable as a matter of law in any court or dispute resolution forum. The sole remedy for non-performance under this MOU shall be termination, with no damages or penalty.

Signature page follows.

Signature Page

Passaic County

The American Red Cross

By: _____
(Signature)

Name: Dr. Arti Kakkar

Title: Executive Director

Date _____

Contact information:

Telephone: 973-881-2834

E-mail: artik@passaiccountynj.org

By: _____
(Signature)

Name: Edward Blanchard

Title: Regional Disaster Officer

Date: _____

Contact information:

Telephone: 551-655-2980 or 973-797-3300

E-mail: edward.blanchard@RedCross.org

ATTACHMENT A – Organization Contact Information

Primary Points of Contact

The primary points of contact in each organization will be responsible for the implementation of the MOU in their respective organizations, coordinating activities between organizations, and responding to questions regarding this MOU. In the event that the primary point of contact is no longer able to serve, a new contact will be designated and the other organization informed of the change.

NOTE: When any attachment is updated, the revised attachment is inserted in the MOU. The MOU **does not** need to be signed again.

Relationship Manager Contact*

Red Cross		Passaic County	
Contact	Nancy Franceschi	Contact	Dr. Arti Kakkar
Title	Disaster Program Manager	Title	Executive Director
Office phone	973-797-3300	Office phone	973-881-2834
Mobile	201-787-7247	Mobile	201-273-3254
Email	Nancy.Franceschi2@redcross.org	Email	artik@passaiccountynj.org

*The Relationship Manager is the person that works with the partner organization in developing and executing the MOU.

Additional Contact

Red Cross		Passaic County	
Contact	Edward Blanchard	Contact	Francine Vince
Title	Regional Disaster Officer	Title	Deputy Director
Office Phone	973-797-3300	Office phone	973-881-2834
Mobile	551-655-2980	Mobile	973-934-9289
Email	Edward.blanchard@redcross.org	Email	francinev@passaiccountynj.org

**The Operations Contact is the person each organization will call to initiate operations activities as defined in the MOU.

Organization Information

Red Cross		Passaic County	
Department	Disaster Cycle Services	Department	Department of Human Services
Address	209 Fairfield Road Fairfield, NJ 07004	Address	401 Grand Street, Room 506, Paterson, NJ 07505
Email	See above	Email	See above
Website	RedCross.org/NJ	Website	PassaicCountyNJ.org/departments/human-services

ATTACHMENT B

Principles of Conduct for The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programs

Principle Commitments:

1. The Humanitarian imperative comes first.
2. Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone.
3. Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint.
4. We shall endeavor not to act as instruments of government foreign policy.
5. We shall respect culture and custom.
6. We shall attempt to build disaster response on local capacities.
7. Ways shall be found to involve program beneficiaries in the management of relief aid.
8. Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs.
9. We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources.
10. In our information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall recognize disaster victims as dignified human beings, not hopeless objects.

More information about the code of conduct can be found at <http://www.ifrc.org/en/publications-and-reports/code-of-conduct>

The Code Register

The International Federation keeps a public record of all the humanitarian organizations that become [signatories of the code](#). The contact details of each organization are verified.

Humanitarian organizations wishing to become a signatory to the code should download and complete the [registration form](#).