

San Joaquin County  
Emergency Medical Services Agency



Disaster Healthcare Volunteers  
Volunteer Mission Assignment Guide



May 13, 2024

# San Joaquin County Disaster Healthcare Volunteers Volunteer Mission Assignment Guide

## I. Purpose:

To provide volunteers clear directions to be followed during all mission assignments.

## II. Scope:

This guide is applicable to all San Joaquin County Disaster Healthcare Volunteers.

## III. Introduction:

Chaos is the one thing all emergencies or disasters have in common. In order to effectively manage and mitigate emergencies, the chaos must be eliminated or greatly reduced. This is accomplished through the implementation of the Incident Command System (ICS). It is only through the strict adherence to ICS principles that chaotic disasters are transformed into manageable incidents. In healthcare settings ICS is commonly referred to as the Hospital Incident Command System (HICS).

The ability of Disaster Healthcare Volunteers to effectively assist with the mitigation of emergencies is directly related to how well each volunteer can integrate into the Incident Command System. This will require volunteers to be familiar with the mission request process and volunteer responsibilities outlined in this guide.

Volunteers may be requested and assigned to participate in disaster exercises, which are designed to simulate real emergencies. Volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in the same manner as they would for a real emergency.

## IV. Mission Requests:

The San Joaquin County EMS Agency receives DHV mission requests from agencies or healthcare facilities on the DHV Mission Request Form, available on the Emergency Preparedness page, Disaster Healthcare Volunteer section <https://www.sigov.org/department/ems/Menu/emergency-preparedness>

The EMS Agency uses this information to create a mission request in the DHV system and searches the database to find volunteers that meet the required qualifications. A mission availability message is then sent to appropriate volunteers to determine their availability to participate in the mission.

## V. Mission Assignments:

From the list of available volunteers, the required numbers of volunteers are selected for mission assignment. The assigned volunteers are then provided with the following mission specific information through the DHV system:

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1. Check-in date
2. Check-in time
3. Check-in location
4. Point of contact at destination
5. Job assignment description
6. What to bring
7. What is being provided (meals, lodging, etc.)
8. EMS Agency Representative contact information

### **VI. Volunteer Responsibilities:**

To ensure the success of the mission, each volunteer is responsible for the following:

1. To follow the assignment instructions provided to you through the DHV system.
  - a. You are encouraged to print out the mission assignment instructions and take them with you.
2. Never respond to a mission until you have been requested and assigned.
3. Never invite non-DHV members (friends or family) to join you.
  - a. Only DHV volunteers requested and assigned through the DHV system are authorized to participate in the mission.
4. Check-in on time
  - a. Showing up late or early causes problems. In many cases check-in times are staggered between groups to avoid delays and bottle necks during the check-in process. It is important that you check-in at your assigned time.
5. Receive a briefing from your immediate supervisor and follow instructions.
  - a. Ask questions if you are not sure what your assigned duties are.
6. Follow the established chain-of-command.
  - a. Ask your immediate supervisor to explain the chain-of-command, do not assume you know it.
    - i. You only work for one person, make sure you know who that person is.
    - ii. Violating the chain-of-command creates serious problems.

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- iii. You may be released from the mission and sent home if you violate the chain-of-command.
  
- 7. Acquire necessary work materials and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
  
- 8. Conduct all tasks in a manner that ensures the safety and welfare of you and your co-workers.
  
- 9. Immediately report safety hazards to your immediate supervisor or the Incident Safety Officer.
  
- 10. Immediately report injuries to your immediate supervisor.
  
- 11. Report all injuries to EMS Agency Representative as soon as initial treatment and stabilization has been completed.
  
- 12. Be professional and courteous.
  
- 13. Notify the EMS Agency Representative (24/7) if your mission assignment is not going well.
  
- 14. Contact the EMS Agency Representative if you have questions or other problems not covered above.

### **VII. Incident Command System (ICS) Training:**

Having a basic understanding of ICS will help Disaster Healthcare Volunteers integrate into Incident Command System during disasters and exercises. The following online and self-paced training courses are available at no cost from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Independent Study Program:

- 1. IS-100.C, Introduction to Incident Command System  
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-100.c&lang=en>
  
- 2. IS-200.C, Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response  
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-200.c&lang=en>
  
- 3. IS-700.B, An Introduction to the National Incident Management System (NIMS)  
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-700.b&lang=en>

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**VIII. Volunteer Mission Assignment Checklist:**

- Receive and follow your mission assignment.
- Print out a copy of the mission assignment from the DHV system and bring it with you.
- Do not respond if you haven't been requested.
- Check-in at the assigned location and time.
- Ask to speak with your Point of Contact.
- Receive a briefing from your immediate supervisor.
- Acquire necessary work materials and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Follow the established chain-of-command.
- Conduct all tasks in a safe manner.
- Immediately report safety hazards to your immediate supervisor or the Incident Safety Officer.
- Immediately report injuries to your immediate supervisor.
- Report all injuries to EMS Agency Representative
- Be professional and courteous.
- Notify the EMS Agency Representative if your mission assignment is not going well.