

Washington County (WI) Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster Bylaws

Mission Statement

The Washington County VOAD has been formed to enhance citizen and community readiness through individual, organizational, and business cooperation; to support all-hazard preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation; and to provide a coordinated response to address unmet recovery needs of families and individuals affected by an emergency/disaster within Washington County.

VOAD

Washington County VOAD is an affiliation of independent voluntary agencies, groups, and individuals who provide planning, preparedness, response and recovery support for emergencies and disaster. VOAD is an umbrella organization for existing agencies active in disaster response.

Statement of Purpose

- To recognize and network with key agencies and contacts throughout Washington County in the field of disaster and emergency preparedness, response and recovery.
- To maintain good working relationships and open communication with government disaster and emergency response organizations.
- To maintain the autonomy of all collaborating agencies/groups without duplication of services.
- To commit to the idea that the best time to train, prepare, and become acquainted with one another is prior to the actual disaster or emergency response.
- To maintain an activation process, a command structure, and a resource identification database. The VOAD membership will work under the direction of the incident command structure contained within the National Incident Management System (NIMS).
- To establish Washington County VOAD as visible and credible participants in the disaster / emergency response arena.
- To provide education, training and preparedness for members.
- To address unmet recovery needs of families and individuals affected by an emergency/disaster within Washington County.

To accomplish these purposes, the Washington County VOAD shall have the authority to exercise all the powers in order to accomplish its charitable and educational purposes, including but not limited to the power to accept donations of money or property, whether real or personal, or any interest therein, wherever situated; provided that only such powers be exercised as are permitted to be exercised by a nonprofit corporation which qualifies as a corporation described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as amended; nor shall it engage directly or indirectly in any activity which would cause the loss of such qualification.

Membership (Full and Associate Members)

All members of the Washington County VOAD Council commit to the following:

- Each agency will maintain a current roster of active members and their skills, and available resources.
- Each agency will activate volunteers and respond when called upon.
- Each Full or Associate member will provide a point of contact and 24-hour contact information.

Full VOAD membership is extended to those agencies/groups/businesses that involve and manage volunteers to meet their missions and purposes, and to government agencies that offer assistance in the form of personnel and resources, to meet the needs of people and communities affected by disaster and emergency. Each agency will have one voting representative on the VOAD Council. Proxy votes are allowed. Full member agency representatives are expected to participate in all VOAD meetings and the annual meeting. Full VOAD membership representatives are expected to serve in an ongoing disaster/emergency planning and organizing role.

Associate VOAD membership is extended to those community groups, individuals or businesses willing to provide volunteer assistance during a disaster relief operation. Associate members are not responsible for planning or preparedness. Associate member representatives are expected to attend the annual meeting. Associate member representatives are invited to attend all VOAD meetings.

Organizational Structure

Meetings:

1. The Washington County VOAD will meet a minimum of quarterly. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson at the request of any member agency.
2. One annual meeting will be held for the purpose of organization and election of officers. Notice of this meeting will be provided, not less than 2 weeks prior to the meeting.
3. Prior to each meeting, members will be sent (by mail or electronically) minutes of the last meeting and a written agenda for the next meeting, noting the location and address of the meeting place.
4. Each meeting will begin on time and end on time as specified on the agenda, unless extending the meeting is deemed necessary and is agreed on by a majority of those in attendance.
5. Topics needing extensive discussion will be moved to sub-committee or a special meeting.
6. Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised will be the authoritative reference for conduct of VOAD meetings.
7. The Full VOAD Members may take action in person or electronically, in any manner permitted by Wisconsin law.

Officers: The officers of the Washington County VOAD shall include a Chair, Secretary and other officers as may be deemed necessary. Officers shall receive no compensation. The VOAD membership will work under the direction of the incident command structure contained within the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Officer positions will be elected from voluntary agencies or individuals. Officers may serve consecutive terms.

- All officer positions have full-membership voting rights.

Elections: Elections will be held at the regular annual meeting with each full-member casting one vote. Special elections may be held to fill vacancies when necessary.

Chairperson: The Chair shall be the principal officer of VOAD and will preside at the VOAD meetings, provide leadership, delegate tasks, schedule meetings and promote communications and cooperation between VOAD members and Emergency Response Agencies. The Chair will provide assistance and support to the new Chairperson following the end of his/her term and shall have custody of the official papers. The Chair will serve a two-year term elected in even years.

Vice-Chairperson: Duties include working with the Chairperson to ensure quality meetings and assisting the Chairperson in promoting communication and cooperation between VOAD members. This person will assume the role of Chairperson in that person's absence. It is the Vice-Chairperson's shared responsibility with the Chairperson to maintain relationships with county VOAD's and Citizen's Corps in the region and the state VOAD. The Vice-Chair will serve a two-year term elected in odd years.

Secretary: Duties include recording and distributing minutes, notifying members of meetings, and correspondence on behalf of Washington County VOAD, and in general perform all duties customary to the office of Secretary. The Secretary will lead the meeting in the absence of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. The Secretary will serve a two-year term elected in even years.

Treasurer: The Treasurer shall have custody of and be responsible for all Long Term Recovery Committee funds; shall keep full and accurate accounts of receipts, disbursements, assets and liabilities of the Washington County VOAD in electronic and written formats; shall maintain and keep records of correspondence received and sent in response to donations; shall maintain a post office box to receive correspondence for the Washington County VOAD Committee; shall present timely and accurate reports of such transactions to the VOAD as required; and shall perform all duties customary to the office of Treasurer.

The Treasurer shall deposit or cause to be deposited all monies in the name of Washington County VOAD such depositories as shall be selected by Washington County VOAD and shall maintain contact with such depositories as necessary. The Treasurer will serve a two-year term elected in even years.

Disaster Coordinator: The Disaster Coordinator serves as first point of contact for VOAD services, and notifies the VOAD Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson when VOAD agencies are activated. The Disaster Coordinator activates appropriate VOAD members using a current activation list of agencies to initiate service or make referrals. The Disaster Coordinator shall serve a two-year term elected in odd years.

Disaster Coordinator Assistant: Assists the Disaster Coordinator with his/her duties, and assumes the roles and responsibilities of the Disaster Coordinator in his/her absence. The Disaster Coordinator Assistant will serve a two-year term elected in even years.

General Provisions

All checks, drafts or other orders for payment shall be signed by such officer or officers as the Washington County VOAD has designated.

Washington County VOAD may accept any contribution, gift, bequest or devise for the purposes of the Washington County VOAD Committee.

The Washington County VOAD shall determine such volunteer or paid staff positions as it shall deem necessary.

Standing Committees

Membership/ Public Awareness Committee:

- Devise a plan for inviting agencies to become VOAD members.
- Annually update listing of VOAD member agencies, their volunteers, skills and resources prior to Annual VOAD meeting.
- Assume responsibility for membership acknowledgement and retention.
- Create a plan for public relations to alert the county of the existence and role of VOAD in preparedness, response and recovery support for emergencies and disaster with a unified message.
- Provide press releases regularly to inform the county of recruitment efforts and training opportunities for volunteers.

Training / Plan Update Committee:

- Assess training needs for VOAD members.
- Create a plan for addressing training needs.
- Provide special training opportunities throughout the year
- Annually review/revise the VOAD Emergency Response Plan for presentation at the Annual VOAD meeting.
- Create and execute an Exercise Plan.

Funding Research Committee:

Conduct on-going review, research and pursuit of all funding strategies, according to adopted procedures, to sustain VOAD and Citizen's Corps activities and report to VOAD at least quarterly.

Additional committees may be formed as needs arise.

Bylaws

Amendments: The Bylaws of Washington County VOAD may be amended by a majority vote of members present at a meeting. Members must be notified of proposed changes a minimum of two weeks in advance of the voting.

Definitions

Activation process: Activation is the method of notification, requesting VOAD's assistance in time of disaster or emergency.

Disaster: A disaster is an emergency of such scope that overwhelms local resources' capabilities to manage or resolve without outside assistance. Outside assistance may come from adjacent communities, counties, states, the Federal government, and / or private organizations. Federal disaster aid is frequently requested for disasters, although it may or may not be awarded.

Emergency Management: Organized analysis, planning, decision making and assignment of available resources to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from the effects of all hazards, be they man-made or natural.

Emergency: An emergency may include occurrences such as a tornado, storm, flood, high water, heat and cold, wind storms, health and safety, earthquake, drought, blizzard, fire, explosion, acts of terrorism or other natural or man-made situation(s) that cause human suffering or creates human needs that the victim(s) cannot alleviate without assistance. Emergencies are normally managed and resolved solely utilizing local resources. No request for federal disaster aid is requested.

Emergency Response Plan: An agency-specific document developed to describe how, and under what circumstances personnel and resources will be alerted, mobilized, deployed and demobilized. It should contain Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), checklists, call lists, command structure, equipment lists, etc.

Incident Command System (ICS): A management tool for command, control and coordination of a response to any type of incident. It provides a means to coordinate the efforts of individual agencies as they work towards the common goal of stabilizing the incident and protecting life, property and the environment. ICS uses principles proven to improve efficiency and effectiveness in a business setting and applies the principles to emergency response. ICS is used to manage both emergency and non-emergency situations of all sizes. The system has considerable internal flexibility and can grow or shrink to meet differing needs.

National Incident Management System (NIMS): A system mandated by the Homeland Security Presidential Declaration (HSPD-5) that provides a consistent nationwide approach for Federal, State, local and tribal governments; the private sector and nongovernmental organizations to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare for, respond to and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size or complexity. To provide for interoperability and compatibility among Federal, State, local and tribal capabilities, the NIMS includes a core set of concepts, principles and terminology. HSPD-5 identifies these as the ICS; multi-agency coordination systems; training; identification and management of resources (including systems for classifying types of resources); qualification and certification; and the collection, tracking and reporting of incident information and incident resources.

Quorum: The members present shall constitute a quorum at all membership meetings.