

## ***Message to State Agencies***

I am contacting you to clarify the procedures Wisconsin State Government is following as we respond to the urgent and ongoing needs of those affected by Hurricane Katrina. Specifically, this memorandum addresses:

- The role of the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC);
- Responding to media inquiries;
- Sources of information about Wisconsin's response;
- A description of the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), a mutual aid agreement between the states to provide disaster assistance;
- Registration of EMAC volunteers;
- EMAC reimbursement, logistical, liability and similar issues;
- Guidelines for state personnel interested in volunteering to provide emergency assistance;
- Tracking state agency costs associated with Katrina relief activities;
- Contacting stakeholder groups;
- Responding to offers of assistance from non-governmental organizations and individuals;
- Fundraisers and other relief efforts organized by state agencies; and
- Sources of assistance for hurricane evacuees.

**Role of the EOC:** The EOC, housed in Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) in the Department of Military Affairs, has been activated and will operate at least during normal business hours and may be extended as needed. While other agencies will be involved in the state's response, WEM and the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) are coordinating all Katrina response issues. State agencies, legislators and other public officials can contact the EOC at (608) 242-3305. The WEM duty officer can be reached 24X7 at (800) 943-0003.

**Media Contacts:** Press inquiries about the State of Wisconsin's response to Katrina should be directed to the EOC at (608) 242-3294.

**Sources of Information:** Executive orders, Governor's Office press releases and other resources are available on the Governor's Website at <http://www.wisgov.state.wi.us/>. Situation reports, WEM press releases and other information is available on the WEM Website at <http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov/index.asp>.

**EMAC Overview:** The Emergency Management Assistance Compact is a mutual aid agreement between the states to provide assistance during disasters. Wisconsin will follow the EMAC procedures in providing assistance to the states impacted by Hurricane Katrina. Under the terms of the compact, states fill requests that are made by the affected states through a nationwide internet broadcast system. WEM is monitoring the EMAC website for requests for assistance from the impacted states. They have asked Wisconsin to develop a list of available personnel and resources for future deployment. Representatives from the law enforcement and fire communities will be working with WEM to help organize long term assistance to the states in need. WEM is also monitoring the website for requests for assistance from other response agencies. WEM will continue to match these requests against the list of people who have signed up on the WEM website. WEM has also passed along EMAC requests to the Departments of Health and Family Services and Natural Resources to determine if they can fill requested positions.

**EMAC Volunteer Registration:** First responders and others with relevant skills should register on the WEM website if they are available to volunteer for assistance at <http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov>.

**EMAC Reimbursement, Liability & Related Issues:** The requesting and assisting states enter into a formal agreement regarding the filling of a request. This formal request helps to ensure that the requesting state receives what it requests and only what it requests. It also allows for the accountability of the people, equipment or supplies requested and facilitates the reimbursement of the unit of government or organization filling the request. Travel cost, lodging, per diem, salary and fringes, and other allowable cost are paid by the responding individual's organization and then reimbursed through EMAC. Cost incurred by people who self deploy will not be reimbursed.

The typical EMAC deployment is for 14 days with a day of travel on each end. States may indicate different deployment periods in individual specific requests. EMAC member states have agreed to accept the licensure and certifications of individuals from member states. Individuals deployed through EMAC are considered agents of the requesting state for tort liability and immunity purposes. If individuals are injured or killed during an EMAC deployment they are compensated in the same manner and the same terms as if the injury or death were sustained in their own state. Reimbursement for costs associated with injuries or deaths may be sought but may not be paid by the requesting state.

To learn more about EMAC go to <http://www.emacweb.org/>.

**State Employee Volunteers:** It is our objective to assist the states affected by Hurricane Katrina by meeting their request for assistance through EMAC. The Office of State Employment Relations (OSER) will distribute specific guidelines regarding payroll and similar issues to state agencies for EMAC deployments. In addition to EMAC deployments, [s. 230.35\(3\)\(e\) Wisc. Stats.](#) provides very specific procedures for state employees to take up to 30 days of paid leave time to provide disaster relief through the American Red Cross. Governor Doyle has issued [Executive Order #117](#), which authorizes this option and has requested that agencies report all requests and approvals for disaster relief leaves of absence to OSER Director Karen Timberlake at (608) 266-9820. Contact OSER Chief Legal Counsel David Vergeront at (608) 266-9820 for additional information. State employees doing volunteer work for other organizations (such as a church or the Salvation Army) must use vacation, personal holiday or other leave time and follow normal approval procedures. WEM strongly discourages self dispatching and freelancing. There is a great urge to do something now but the need for help will be long term and state government's goal is to be able to provide that long term assistance.

**Tracking Katrina-Related Costs:** State agencies should record all costs incurred as part of the response to the Katrina emergency, including enough detail to distinguish between EMAC and non-EMAC costs.

**Contacting Stakeholder Groups:** State agencies are encouraged to contact major stakeholder groups (e.g., DHFS will contact the Wisconsin Hospital Association) to schedule meetings with them to discuss Katrina relief efforts. The meeting agenda should include: brief them on relevant state government relief efforts; discuss emerging issues; solicit their suggestions for further action and potential additional resources; encourage ongoing communication; and respond to any questions they may have. Contact the EOC at (608) 242-3305 and Sue Reinardy (DHFS Deputy Secretary and State Relief Effort Coordinator/State Emergency Operations Center) via e-mail prior to scheduling these meetings and report the meeting results to the EOC and Sue Reinardy.

**Responding to Offers of Assistance from Non-Governmental Sources:** Governor Doyle has encouraged state residents, businesses and organizations to generously assist those impacted by Katrina. The most helpful contribution people can make at this time is financial donations to the relief effort through the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army and other well-established relief organizations. At this time, the impacted states are not prepared to process independent offers of assistance. Therefore, state agencies and others fielding offers of assistance should direct callers to the following resources:

*Donate Money:*

American Red Cross, (800) 435-7669 (English) or (800) 257-7575 (Spanish)  
Salvation Army, (800) 264-6412

*Register a Home for Evacuee Relocation:* <http://www.hurricanehousing.org>

*Search for Shelter Occupants by Name (Salvation Army Website):* <http://www.satarn.org/>

*Volunteer to Help (May be Contacted at a Later Date):*

Salvation Army - <http://www.salvationarmywi.org> -  
<http://www.salvationarmyusa.org>

American Red Cross - <http://www.redcross.org>

Wisconsin Emergency Assistance Volunteer Registry -  
<http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/preparedness/weavr>

U.S. Department Health and Human Services - <https://volunteer.hhs.gov>

*Other Offers to Donate Goods or Services:* WEM has opened a special phone line that state agency staff, and others can use to refer calls from individuals and organizations that want to discuss their offers of assistance with a state official. The number, (608) 242-3305, is staffed 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., weekdays. THIS NUMBER IS NOT FOR PUBLICATION – PLEASE TRANSFER CALLERS TO THIS NUMBER.

Links to relief organizations are also listed on the Governor's Website at <http://www.wisgov.state.wi.us/>.

**State Employee Relief Efforts:** The Department of Administration (DOA) strongly supports state employee efforts to raise funds on behalf of the victims of Hurricane Katrina. Given the number and variety of efforts that employees are undertaking, pursuant to s. Adm 2.05, *Wis. Admin. Code*, DOA has delegated to each agency head the authority to approve the use of state facilities utilized by the agency for employee-organized fund raising events on behalf of the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

**Sources of Assistance to Hurricane Evacuees:** Milwaukee Impact 211 is prepared to serve as the Wisconsin Hurricane Relief Center. The 211 center will be able to answer calls from evacuees in Wisconsin in need of services at (866) 211-3380. They will be able to refer evacuees and family members to appropriate resources. In addition, evacuees are asked to register with FEMA at (800) 621-3362 or TTY for the hearing/speech impaired at (800) 462-7585. They may be eligible for federal disaster relief programs which include disaster housing and other grants. The current hours and days of operation are 24 hours a day, seven days per week. Registration is also available online on the FEMA website at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov). In addition, evacuees are advised to contact the local American Red Cross chapter and the local public health department to determine what state and local resources are available. To help answer some of the concerns and questions, WEM has listed links to various programs and departments on the WEM website at <http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov>.

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