



As an Illinois State or Local Government Employee You Can Make a Difference - Volunteer for the American Red Cross

State of Illinois and Local Government Employees have an opportunity, through the Disaster Leave Act, to help in times of need. We encourage you to consider volunteering.

As a State or Local Government Employee, You Can Answer the Call

Sometimes the plea comes from a stunned family whose home has been destroyed by a fire. Sometimes it comes from people who are evacuating because of flooding and need shelter from encroaching waters.

As a State or local government employee, you can answer this plea if you are a disaster volunteer for the American Red Cross. As a disaster volunteer, you can become eligible to receive *disaster leave* **without any loss of pay, annual leave or sick time**.

How Can I Help?

There are many roles to play as a Red Cross disaster volunteer – enough to use your skills, talents and interests to make a real difference to disaster victims.

It is simple to become a Red Cross disaster volunteer. Register at your chapter for the no cost classes you will need to work as a disaster volunteer. At a minimum, this includes:

- Introduction to Disaster Services
- First Aid
- The Disaster Services basic course(s) for the function you choose.

Once you complete the required training and if permitted by your supervisors, you may be eligible to accept assignments, using *disaster leave*, to help others. These assignments can be within the State or anywhere in the U.S. For more information about this, contact the Disaster Services Department at your Red Cross chapter.

Your Volunteer Assignment

As a Red Cross disaster volunteer, you decide how you would like to help. You can choose to get the training you need to do one or more of these important jobs:

- Damage Assessment
- Client Services
- Mass Care
- Disaster Health Services
- Disaster Mental Health Services
- Information Technology



Other jobs include logistics; communications; staffing; liaison with government or other voluntary agencies, public affairs; and more. **Whatever your background and interests, there's a place for you to make a difference.**

Be a Red Cross Volunteer

Here's How It Works

The State of Illinois has enacted the Disaster Service Volunteer Leave Act, 5 ILCS 335. The law provides that state employees, with supervisory approval, that are certified volunteers with the Red Cross, can have up to 20 days paid time per year to assist the Red Cross in a disaster which has been declared by the Governor or, which is a Level 3 or above, as declared by the Red Cross. Such leave is without a loss of seniority and does not require a use of accrued benefit time.



The Local Government Disaster Service Volunteer Act, 50 ILCS 122, also applies to local government agencies that have authorized their employees to participate.

If You are Interested in Volunteering

- Contact the Disaster Services Department at your American Red Cross chapter.
- Sign up and take training from your Red Cross chapter to become a Disaster Services volunteer.
- Ask your Red Cross chapter to send a letter to your supervisor advising that you have met all Red Cross requirements to be a Disaster Services volunteer and may be requested in the future to be assigned to a disaster relief operation.
- In the event of a disaster, you will be notified by your Red Cross chapter that your help is needed and where you should report for your assignment. You must notify your supervisor that the Red Cross has requested your assistance and is asking for *authorization* for you to be placed on *disaster leave*. Once your supervisor approves, you should then report for your assignment.

To find your nearest Red Cross office visit www.redcross.org or call 1-800-Red Cross.



**American
Red Cross**

Disaster Services

