



City of San Diego

# Disaster Service Worker (DSW) Training

City of San Diego  
Office of Homeland Security  
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# Disaster Service Worker Defined

- Per California Government Code, Section 3100-3109, **all public employees** within the state are **declared as Disaster Service Workers (DSWs)**.
- As DSWs, City employees are **obligated to perform** various **disaster service activities** as may be assigned to them by their superiors during times of emergency.
- While serving as DSWs, City employees:
  - Will be paid.
  - Cannot be held liable for actions within the scope of their responsibilities.
  - Are covered by usual workers compensation provisions.



# DSW Oath or Affirmation

- Before entering upon the duties of employment, all City employees take **an oath or affirmation that declares them to be DSWs** in time of need.
  - This is the same oath or affirmation that confirms each employee's willingness to support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of California.
- This oath or affirmation is:
  - Required by California Government Code, Section 3102.
  - Set forth in the California Constitution.
  - Signed by all employees during their hiring process.



# General Obligations of DSWs

- As a DSW, during emergencies, disasters, or conditions of extreme peril to life, property, and resources:
  - You can be required to report to work.
  - You may be assigned to perform disaster service activities.
  - Assigned disaster service activities may be at locations and times, and under conditions, **other than** your normal work assignment.
  - Your **DSW duties may continue** into the recovery phase of the emergency.
- First responders (e.g. firefighters, police officers, emergency medical service staff) and other public safety personnel that already have assigned emergency duties will not be utilized as DSWs.



# Disaster Service Activities

- Disaster service activities include any act contributing to “the protection of the health and safety and preservation of the lives and property of the people of the state from the effects of natural, manmade, or war-caused emergencies.”
- When possible, DSWs will be assigned to disaster service activities that resemble as closely as possible their current job duties and classification.
- Examples of **disaster service activities/roles** that DSWs may be assigned during disasters and emergencies include, **but are not limited to**:
  - Answering phones
  - Delivering/dispensing supplies
  - Managing volunteers
  - Staffing barricades
  - Filling sandbags
  - Damage surveys/assessments
  - Delivering messages
  - Tracking information
  - Working in a shelter
  - Serving as an interpreter
  - Working in a Local Assistance Center
  - Clearing debris



# Activation/Assignment as a DSW

- Typically, the City Emergency Operations Center will determine the need for DSWs, and then task City departments with sourcing them (if required).
- During a citywide (or larger) *emergency or disaster that occurs while at work*:
  - Report to/contact your department supervisor for potential activation and assignment as a DSW.
- During a citywide (or larger) *emergency or disaster that occurs while at home or away from work*:
  - Ensure the safety of your family.
  - Follow your department's emergency reporting instructions.
  - Continue to monitor sources of emergency information.



# Emergency Information Sources

- Be sure to monitor the following information sources during citywide or larger emergencies and disasters:
  - Your supervisor.
  - Your work desk phone, cell phone, voicemail, and email.
  - City Employee Emergency Information Hotline – (619) 236-6125
  - City of San Diego Website: [www.sandiego.gov](http://www.sandiego.gov)
  - CityTV
  - CityNet
  - KOGO 600 AM and KLSD 1360 AM radio stations (Emergency Alert System)
  - Local television news
  - [www.sdcountyemergency.com](http://www.sdcountyemergency.com)



# Get Prepared for Emergencies

- When you, your family, and your office are prepared for emergencies:
  - You are all safer and more secure.
  - You relieve some of the burden of response and recovery operations required by the government, charities/non-governmental organizations, communities, and the private sector.
  - You are more ready to serve as a DSW and assist others in need.
- Getting prepared is as easy as:
  - Making a Plan.
  - Getting a Kit.
  - Staying Informed.
  - Getting Involved.



# Emergency Preparedness Sources

- There are numerous sources for emergency preparedness information and action steps.
- Two of the most exhaustive and authoritative sources are:
  - ReadySanDiego at [www.readysandiego.org](http://www.readysandiego.org) (FEMA and County of San Diego)
  - PrepareSanDiego at [www.preparesandiego.org](http://www.preparesandiego.org) (American Red Cross)
- Both sources provide valuable and important emergency preparedness information, and may be utilized/referred to individually or in conjunction.



# City DSW Training Program

- The following elements constitute the City's DSW Training Program:
  - Required
    - **Initial DSW Training PPT brief:** Presented by Human Resources during each New Employee Orientation , and also presented semi-annually by the Office of Homeland Security.
    - **Annual review of the DSW Training PPT** on the OHS website at [www.sandiego.gov/ohs/](http://www.sandiego.gov/ohs/) (individual effort)
  - Recommended/Optional
    - **IS-100.B** *Introduction to Incident Command System.*
    - **IS-700.A** *National Incident Management System, An Introduction.*
    - Note: Both courses above are part of the online FEMA Independent Study Program, approx 3 hours each in length, with an online exam and certificate upon completion. Register at <http://training.fema.gov/IS/>



# DSW Training Program (cont'd)

- Additionally, the Office of Homeland Security distributes quarterly citywide email newsletters reminding all employees about the DSW Training Program, and providing employees with emergency preparedness information and resources.
- Note that some City employee classifications are identified as Designated Responder Personnel, and subject to required National Incident Management System (NIMS) training beyond the DSW Training Program requirements.
  - The Office of Homeland Security coordinates with City departments to identify, accomplish, and record such NIMS training requirements, separate from the DSW Training Program.



# Conclusion

- As a City of San Diego employee, you may be called upon to serve the public as a Disaster Service Worker (DSW) during emergencies and disasters.
- If assigned to perform disaster service activities, they may be outside of your normal work hours, locations, conditions, and duties.
- During citywide or larger emergencies, be sure to contact your department supervisor, follow your department's reporting instructions, and monitor appropriate sources of emergency information.
- By getting prepared for emergencies, you increase your safety and security, and you are more ready to perform your duties as a DSW.
- You are an important and valuable part of the City's emergency response and recovery capabilities. **Thank you for your willingness to serve!**



# References

- California Government Code, Section 3100-3109
- City of San Diego Administrative Regulation 1.01, *Emergency Operations Procedures*
- City of San Diego Emergency Operations Plan, March 2011
- City and County of San Francisco *Disaster Service Worker Training* (PPT)



# Points of Contact

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