

Red Cross Urgently Needs Hundreds Of Volunteers For National Deployments As Hurricane And Wildfire Season Nears

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ST. LOUIS — Experts predict we are in for a busy hurricane and wildfire season this summer and the American Red Cross is preparing now. In anticipation of responding to the communities that will be impacted, the American Red Cross of Missouri-Arkansas is recruiting members of the public to volunteer to deploy across the nation to help those expected to be affected by devastating hurricanes and wildfires this summer.

“With the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of volunteers currently available to deploy is greatly reduced, so we are asking individuals who are healthy and available to consider joining the American Red Cross as a temporary disaster volunteer now,” said Mary Jane Thomsen, Greater St. Louis executive director. “If it’s something you have been thinking about doing, you are needed now more than ever.”

Individuals need to be able to deploy for a 14-day period and work 8 to 12-hour shifts. Three hours of virtual training (six hours for supervisors) will be required prior to

deployment and a pre-health screening will be conducted. Interested volunteers are asked to review the [CDC](#) guidance for [people who are at higher risk for severe illness](#), and consult their health care provider to determine if they should deploy.

Volunteers needed for shelter operations and Disaster Health Services

The Red Cross primarily needs volunteers to support sheltering efforts. Because of COVID-19, the Red Cross is placing those needing a safe place to stay in emergency hotel lodging when possible. If hotel stays aren't possible, then traditional shelters will be opened. To help keep people safe, additional precautions will be in place and special training has been developed to ensure protocols are followed.

For **shelters**, the Red Cross needs volunteers to staff areas including reception, registration, feeding, dormitory, information collection and other vital tasks. Both associate and supervisory level opportunities are available. In **Disaster Health Services**, volunteers with health care backgrounds are needed in shelters to help assess individuals' health and provide hands-on care in alignment with professional licensures (RN, LPN, LVN, APRN, NP, EMT, paramedic, MD/DO or PA). Specifically, volunteers are needed who can provide care as delegated by a licensed nurse in shelters; this could include assisting with activities of daily living, personal assistance services, providing health education and helping to replace medications, durable medical equipment or consumable medical supplies.

“If you are available to support various shelter operation staffing needs or are a healthcare worker who can deploy to areas affected by hurricanes and wildfires this summer, the Red Cross needs you to volunteer now,” said Thomsen. “Additional training, COVID-19 safety protocols and health measures will be in place for safety. Our number one priority for the Red Cross is the health and safety of our employees, volunteers and the people we serve.”

To volunteer, please go to redcross.org/volunteertoday or contact Kristin Pendleton at our Greater St. Louis office at 314-281-7968 or Kristin.pendleton@redcross.org.

About the American Red Cross:

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies about 40 percent of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a not-for-profit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please visit redcross.org or cruzrojaamericana.org, or visit us on Twitter at [@RedCross](https://twitter.com/RedCross).

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