

Red Cross Deploys Volunteers To Gulf Coast; Temporary Disaster Volunteers Needed

August 24 2020 1:32 PM



ST. LOUIS — The American Red Cross of Missouri and Arkansas is deploying volunteers to the Gulf Coast to support Texas and Louisiana as two storms, Laura and Marco, move toward the coast.

As of Monday morning, 16 volunteers from across the region were in route to support various disaster response needs including shelters and health services. Another group of volunteers recently returned from deployments to Hurricane Hanna and Isaias.

“In anticipation of the devastation that may result from these two storms, we have sent several volunteers from Missouri and Arkansas to help along the Gulf Coast and we anticipate more will be needed,” said Chris Harmon, Regional Disaster Officer for American Red Cross of Missouri-Arkansas. “COVID-19 has affected the number of our current volunteers who are available to deploy, so we are asking healthy individuals who can deploy up to 14 days to consider joining us as a temporary disaster volunteer.”

Additional training, COVID-19 safety protocols and health measures will be in place for safety.

Disaster volunteers needed for upcoming deployments

The American Red Cross of Missouri-Arkansas is recruiting members of the public to volunteer to deploy to help those expected to be affected by devastating disasters this summer.

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.

The Red Cross primarily needs volunteers to support sheltering efforts, but other disaster response needs also exist. 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.

To volunteer, please go to redcross.org/volunteertoday.