Shelter Fundamentals Exercise
Disaster Cycle Services

Participant Handout

November 2013

American Red Cross

Participant Name:

Date: _____   Location: _____

Skills Station Instructions
1. ***Each task must be initialed in the YES or NO column by the Skills Station Facilitator.***
2. Participants are to work as a team to complete all tasks; however, each participant must have his/her check off sheet completed.
3. Please return each station to the condition you found it and follow the facilitators' instructions and station specific guidelines.

American Red Cross
Shelter Fundamentals Exercise
Skills Station Participant Check-off Sheet

Dormitory Skills Station Objectives

1. Participants will demonstrate the ability to set up a post impact sample shelter dormitory area for four residents according to established Red Cross shelter guidelines with the necessary equipment and supplies.

2. Participants will demonstrate their knowledge of the Dormitory function by addressing key areas of consideration when setting up a dormitory, including functional and access needs and resources needed for setting up and maintaining a dormitory.

3. Participants will demonstrate their knowledge of shelter closing procedures by returning the dormitory to "pre-shelter" conditions.

Dormitory Skills Station Tasks	Yes	No
Set up a sample shelter dormitory area for four residents meeting conditions specified below:		
Protect the flooring		
Ensure adequate space for residents with functional and access needs		
Ensure space for each resident meets the recommended square footage		
Identify the type and location of needed signage		
Set up individual cots and client furnishings		
Explain key areas of consideration and resources needed when setting up and maintaining a dormitory		
Create a client location chart		
Explain the reporting (oral and written) that dormitory workers may have to provide during the life cycle of a shelter		
Perform the shelter closing procedure of cleaning the cots (may work in pairs) *(Return the skills station to its original condition)*		

Dormitory Facilitator Feedback

Facilitator Name:

Facilitator Comments
Observations (Strengths and areas for improvement)

Registration Skills Station Objectives
1. Participants will demonstrate the ability to set up a sample shelter reception and registration area for residents according to established Red Cross shelter guidelines with equipment and supplies provided.
2. Participants will demonstrate their knowledge of the shelter resident interview and registration process by taking turns with a partner in a role play of an interview and completing intake forms for incoming residents.
3. Participants will demonstrate their knowledge of the registration process by explaining the purpose of several key forms.
4. Participants will demonstrate their knowledge of the Registration function by addressing key areas of consideration and resources needed when setting up and maintaining a reception and registration area.
5. Participants will demonstrate their knowledge of shelter closing procedures by returning the welcome and registration area to "pre-shelter" conditions.

Registration Skills Station Tasks	Yes	No
Set up a sample shelter reception and registration area meeting conditions specified below:		
Set up adequate tables and chairs for registration process		
Have proper forms and administrative supplies on hand		
Ensure there is a barrier in place to prevent unauthorized or unregistered entry		
Identify needed signage based on the shelter population		
Conduct an interview for incoming residents		
Complete Shelter Registration Form		
Complete Initial Intake and Assessment Tool		
Distribute Shelter Resident Information Handout		
Explain the purpose of the following forms or documents: • *Safe and Well Registration form* • *Safe and Well wallet cards or brochure* • *Unaccompanied Minor form* • *Shelter Media Sign In, Sign Out form* • *Multilingual Shelter Communication Tool*		
Explain key areas of consideration when setting up a reception and registration area and key resources for setting up and maintaining a reception and registration area		
Perform shelter closing procedures by returning the registration area to "pre-shelter" conditions		

Note: *Facilitator Feedback space on page 4.*

Registration Facilitator Feedback
Facilitator Name:
Facilitator Comments Observations (Strengths and areas for improvement)

American Red Cross
Shelter Fundamentals Exercise
Skills Station Participant Check-off Sheet

Information Skills Station Objectives

1. Participants will demonstrate their understanding of external and internal signage needs by considering other functional areas (reception/registration, feeding and dormitory, health, and mental health) to provide the necessary signs for information communication.
2. Participants will demonstrate their understanding in providing for shelter resident diversity by identifying language, feeding, health and accessibility needs in a shelter and providing examples of how to convey information effectively to meet each of these needs.
3. Participants will demonstrate their knowledge of the Information function by addressing key areas of consideration and resources needed when setting up and maintaining effective communications throughout the shelter.
4. Participants will demonstrate their knowledge of shelter closing procedures by identifying tasks that need to be completed to return the shelter to "pre-shelter" conditions.

Information Skills Station Tasks	Yes	No
Identify types and locations of internal and external signage by coordinating with other functional area groups and considering the shelter demographics to provide the necessary signs for effective communication specified below:		
Identify and post signage for the following areas: • *Reception/Registration Station* • *Dormitory Station* • *Feeding Station*		
Identify language, feeding, health, and accessibility challenges in a shelter and provide examples of how to convey information effectively to meet these challenges		
Explain key areas of consideration and resources needed when setting up and maintaining effective communications throughout the shelter.		
Perform closing procedures by returning the information area to "pre-shelter" conditions		

Information Facilitator Feedback

Facilitator Name:

Facilitator Comments
Observations (Strengths and areas for improvement)

Feeding Skills Station Objectives

1. Participants will demonstrate the ability to set up a sample shelter canteen area and account for expended canteen supplies according to established Red Cross shelter guidelines.

2. Participants will demonstrate their knowledge of the Feeding function by addressing key areas of consideration and resources needed when setting up and maintaining a feeding/canteen area.

3. Participants will demonstrate their knowledge of shelter closing procedures by completing a closing inventory and returning the feeding/canteen area to "pre-shelter" conditions.

Feeding Skills Station Tasks	Yes	No
Set up a sample shelter feeding/canteen area meeting conditions specified below:		
Set up canteen area		
Take opening inventory using the Shelter Inventory form		
Explain space conditions in the dining area for clients with functional and access needs		
Identify signage as needed for the shelter population		
Explain key areas of consideration when setting up a feeding/canteen area; and key resources for setting up and maintaining a feeding/canteen area		
Perform shelter closing procedures by completing the Shelter Inventory form for closing and returning the canteen area to "its original condition		

Feeding Facilitator Feedback

Facilitator Name:

Facilitator Comments
Observations (Strengths and areas for improvement)

Opening and Organizing the Shelter Checklist

Use this checklist to help set up the shelter and get it ready for residents to arrive.

For All Areas

Reporting to the Shelter

☐ Sign in and participate in a job induction.

☐ Determine who your supervisor is and exchange contact information.

☐ Establish a reporting schedule with your supervisor.

The Facility

☐ Be aware of any pre-existing damage. If you notice any damage, take pictures, if possible, and alert your supervisor immediately.

☐ Inquire about equipment and products that are available for shelter use. Put signs on any equipment or products that are not to be used, or secure them in a separate area.

☐ Take an initial inventory of all items using the *Shelter Inventory* form. Use one form for facility supplies such as kitchen equipment and paper towels, and another form for Red Cross supplies such as comfort kits and food.

☐ As you set up any area, consider accessibility for people with functional and access needs, such as people with visual impairments or who are non-English speakers.

Registration

Physical Set up

☐ Allow space for a reception area. Keep it far enough away from registration tables that there are no privacy concerns.

☐ If opening a large shelter, set up a table with snacks and water.

☐ Place the registration table(s) as close to the main entrance as possible to welcome those entering the shelter.

☐ Ensure the setup allows access for people with disabilities and/or functional/access needs, such as wheelchairs and service animals.

☐ Use enough tables and chairs to provide comfort, efficiency and confidentiality—don't put tables or chairs too close to each other.

☐ To support effective registration efforts and provide a secure environment, use only one entrance to the building, if possible. Use effective signage or position shelter staff at other entrances to direct shelter residents to appropriate areas. However, **fire exits should never be blocked.**

☐ Try to create a physical barrier so that no one can enter the shelter without first registering or signing in.

Forms and Supplies

Obtain from the shelter supply kit:

- ☐ Shelter Registration Forms (English and Spanish)
- ☐ Shelter Resident Information handouts
- ☐ Initial Intake and Assessment Tool with Instructions
- ☐ Multilingual Shelter Communication Tool
- ☐ Unaccompanied Minors Report Form
- ☐ Staff Sign In/Out
- ☐ Media Sign In/Out

- ☐ Safe and Well documents
  - Emergency Welfare Inquiry form
  - Safe and Well Registration form
  - Safe and Well wallet cards (in appropriate languages)
  - Overview of Safe and Well website
- ☐ Registration signage
- ☐ Pens, stapler, paper clips, hole punch, etc.
- ☐ Organizational folders and binders for forms
- ☐ Hand sanitizer

Providing Information

Supplies

- ☐ Obtain supplies from the shelter supply kit as needed, including shelter signage, tape, paper, and pens or markers.

External Signage

- ☐ Post signs from main roads so that the shelter can be located. Keep a log of where signs are posted so they can be updated or removed as necessary.
- ☐ Signage on the outside of the building should direct clients to the entrance where registration is set up. Every parking lot and every possible entrance should feature a sign directing people to the registration area.
- ☐ If the accessible entrance is located in a different location than the main entrance, be sure to provide signage directing clients to both.

Internal Signage

- ☐ Post signs to identify the following areas, when applicable:

  - ☐ Registration
  - ☐ Dormitory
  - ☐ Cafeteria
  - ☐ Health Services
  - ☐ Staff Area
  - ☐ Children's Play Area
  - ☐ Men's/Women's Restrooms
  - ☐ Temporary Respite Care for Children

  - ☐ Men's/Women's Showers
  - ☐ Security
  - ☐ Information Desk
  - ☐ Evacuation Routes
  - ☐ Smoking Areas
  - ☐ Quiet Area
  - ☐ Administrative Area

□ Ensure that Red Cross identification is posted all around the shelter, at least one per wall in large rooms, including the exterior of the facility and all common areas.

□ Post signs in applicable languages and large print, as needed. Inform your supervisor if the language needed is not in the shelter supply kit.

□ Post a bulletin board with an introductory welcome message, as well as shelter rules and other helpful information.

□ Post information about the daily schedule (meal times, shower times, lights out, etc.) as soon as possible.

Dormitory

Planning Space

□ Find out what the space plan is for the dormitory/sleeping areas, including the potential for separate spaces for families with small children, the elderly, single men, single women, night workers who sleep during the day and any other unique situation.

□ Designate dormitory space using the following guidelines:

  o Evacuation shelters:

   ▪ Allow ~20 square feet per person, or the size of a single air mattress with a few inches around it to spare.

   ▪ The space for each person does not need to marked.

  o Post-impact shelters:

   ▪ Allow ~40-60 square feet of sleeping space per person, or about a 5 foot by 8 foot area.

   ▪ Allow ~100 square feet of sleeping space per person with support equipment such as wheelchairs, lift equipment or service animals.

□ Plan for ease of movement. Provide walkways of 4-6 feet as needed (wide enough for a wheelchair or two people to pass through).

□ Include access for persons with disabilities and other forms of support for people with particular needs (i.e., a mobility disability, hearing or sight impaired with or without service animal, etc.)

  o Ask where they would like their sleeping space to be in the dormitory. They may prefer to be close to emergency exits, restrooms, or a power source depending on their needs.

□ Post the ARC Poster Kit 906 *Rules for a Red Cross Shelter* where they are clearly visible.

Cots and Comfort Kits

□ Set up an area to distribute comfort kits and other appropriate items, as needed. Do not put them out on cots in advance. Do not distribute them to children.

□ Set up standard cots before residents arrive, when possible. Do not set up universal cots in advance.

□ Ask your supervisor if you should place blankets on cots in advance. Plan for two blankets per person.

□ Make a client location chart, to be used for finding people within the dormitory. Post it where it will be accessible only to staff members.

Feeding

Facility

☐ Set up a canteen with a variety of snacks and drinks.

☐ Set up a serving area, where residents will get their meals.

☐ Set up a dining area, where residents will eat their meals. Set up enough tables and chairs to accommodate the maximum number of people you are expecting to serve, or establish two feeding times.

☐ Place hand sanitizer at the beginning of the food service line and on the tables.

☐ Plan the set-up of the feeding site(s) carefully. Think about traffic flow, ease of access for those with functional or access needs, and overall organization.

☐ Consider how to accommodate residents who require access to food or refrigeration of medication during non-meal times.

Food/Supplies/Equipment

☐ Find out about the feeding plan. Will meals come from a local vendor, contracted vendor, on-site kitchen or other sources?

☐ Make sure the food and beverage table in the registration area is well-stocked.

☐ Familiarize yourself with the feeding/kitchen area and the equipment: beverage/food Cambros, coolers, hot water machines, ice machines, coffee percolators/urns, etc.

☐ Familiarize yourself with the mass care items that can be distributed: snacks, water, comfort kits, etc.

Signs

☐ Coordinate with Providing Information to post information for clients, including meal/snack times, availability of beverages, etc. Signs may need to be in multiple languages and large print, depending on the client population.

☐ Post food safety information for the feeding staff, including reminders to wash hands, cooking temperatures for food, etc.

Operating the Shelter Checklist

Use this checklist for daily operation of the shelter.

For All Areas

Facility

- ☐ Inspect the area for safety, security and sanitation issues at least once per shift. Report the results on the *Shelter Shift Inspection* form.
- ☐ If you observe any damage, alert your supervisor immediately.
- ☐ Ensure that all signs, including Red Cross identification and signs around the exterior perimeter remain posted and are updated as needed.

Reports and Logs

- ☐ Sign in and out for every shift.
- ☐ Find out what data should be reported to your supervisor and when it should be reported, such as number of new registrations or number of meals served.
- ☐ Update the *Shelter Log* with any unusual events, situations, problems, solutions, etc.
- ☐ Review the *Shelter Log* at the beginning of your shift.
- ☐ Talk with shelter residents regularly and communicate their concerns to your supervisor.
- ☐ Sharing information is vital. Brief incoming staff with all relevant information, including:
    - o Any maintenance issues.
    - o Supplies that have been depleted or are running low, as well as any additional supplies that are needed.
    - o Names of clients who have offered to help during the shift.
    - o Client needs (i.e., translators, medical, mental health, dietary restrictions, etc.)

Helpers

- ☐ Recruit shelter residents to help with tasks that don't involve access to client information. Tasks could include floor monitor or runner in the registration area, garbage removal, sweeping, mopping, etc.
- ☐ Create a chore chart for clients to sign up if needed.

Registration

When clients arrive at a shelter, the registration table is their first contact with the American Red Cross. Remember that they are displaced from their homes, possibly separated from loved ones, or may have medical, functional or access needs. It is important to help them feel safe, comfortable and welcome. Register them as quickly as possible, be patient, and above all, treat them with respect.

Reception
☐ Regularly acknowledge and see to the needs of families who are waiting to be registered.
☐ Identify clients who have immediate needs, such as medical attention, and refer them to the appropriate person.
☐ If the registration area is busy, distribute the *Shelter Resident Information* handout and explain the rules to each family before they reach the registration table.

Registration Process
☐ Register clients using the *Shelter Registration Form*—one per household.
☐ Complete one *Initial Intake and Assessment Tool* per household to ensure proper assistance for clients with medical or functional needs, dietary concerns, or behavioral health assistance.
☐ If registration forms are not available, use index cards or sheets of lined paper. When needed, request to use the facility's copier machine.
☐ Point out the rules poster and give each family a copy of the *Shelter Resident Information* handout.
☐ Remind residents that they are to notify someone at registration each time they leave or return to the shelter.
☐ Ask about processes for the following:
   o Making referrals when needs are identified on the *Initial Intake and Assessment Tool*.
   o Organizing and filing registration forms.
   o Tracking residents as they come and go from the shelter (temporarily or permanently).
☐ Notify the shelter manager or your supervisor immediately if:
   o An unaccompanied minor needs to register.
   o Someone answers "yes" to the question on the *Shelter Registration Form* about needing to register with a government agency.

Reporting
☐ Maintain shelter statistics and, on request, report this information to your supervisor or shelter manager.
☐ Ensure that all forms are kept confidential and secure. Only the shelter manager, shift supervisor, or higher may have access to these forms. Media and law enforcement are not permitted to walk around the shelter or obtain forms or the information on them. If asked to share this information, immediately inform your supervisor or shelter manager so they can determine the appropriate action.
☐ Record the number of new registrations on the *Daily Shelter Report*.

Shelter Visitors
☐ In order to protect the privacy of shelter residents, you cannot confirm the presence of any resident within the shelter.
☐ All visitors, including media and politicians, should be greeted and treated in a professional manner and not turned away. Ask them politely to wait while you get the shelter manager or shift supervisor.
☐ Ask media to sign in on the *Media Sign In/Out* sheet and wait while you get the shelter manager. Immediately contact the shelter manager and, if available, someone in Disaster Public Affairs.
☐ Know and follow the procedures at your shelter for handling all types of donations.
☐ Use the *Resource Record (Form 6455)* to record all accepted donations.

Providing Information

Remember that you are the liaison between the information the residents receive and the disaster operation and shelter staff. Do not assume that everyone can read posted notices or hear spoken announcements.

Communication Methods

Use various methods for communicating important information to shelter residents.

☐ Signage in appropriate languages   ☐ Resident Meetings

☐ Bulletin Boards   ☐ Information Desk

☐ Fliers   ☐ PA Announcements

☐ One-on-One Conversations

Disseminate Information

☐ Make sure residents are aware of general shelter information—meal times, lights out, etc.

☐ Update residents on the status of the disaster.

☐ Provide information on the Disaster Relief Operation.

☐ Provide information about community resources that might be available to help meet disaster-caused needs of shelter residents, including government, non-profit and faith-based resources. This could also include information such as nearby laundromats, public transportation and pet shelters.

☐ Remind residents that any personal items they bring into the shelter are their responsibility.

☐ Ensure that residents who were not able to attend shelter meetings receive pertinent information.

☐ Inform residents about safety concerns and issues at the shelter.

Confirming Information

☐ Confirm all information. Do not disseminate information until it has been confirmed, and work with shelter staff to dispel rumors.

☐ Keep an updated rumor/fact board to dispel rumors in the shelter.

Dormitory

Supplies

☐ Distribute comfort kits, one per resident (should last ~3 days). Do not give them directly to children.

☐ Distribute blankets, allowing two per cot.

Monitoring

☐ Circulate through the dormitory and surrounding areas regularly to make sure that they are secure.

☐ Monitor sleeping areas at night.

☐ Monitor the area to prevent residents from bringing firearms, alcohol, non-prescription drugs, tobacco, etc., into the dormitory.

☐ Be sure there is adequate ventilation and that the room temperature is comfortable.

☐ Ensure no food or drinks other than water are consumed in the dormitory area.

☐ Make sure lighting is dim during sleeping times.

☐ Look for tripping hazards and make sure aisles are maintained.

☐ If you see that rules are being broken, enforce the rules in the most polite and respectful way possible.

Reporting

☐ Provide a daily midnight headcount at the direction of your supervisor, for inclusion in the NSS. For some operations, a noon count will be conducted.

Feeding

Inventory

☐ Write everything down. Track initial inventory, the number of meals/snacks served, and the number of mass care items given out.

☐ Make sure you understand and follow the shelter's process for inventory of meals and snacks.

☐ A bottle of water is counted as a snack if given without a meal.

☐ Make sure the canteen area and reception snack table are kept appropriately stocked.

Serving Food

☐ Assist with preparing and serving meals at the direction of your supervisor.

☐ Be sure to practice safe food handling at all times.

Closing the Shelter Checklist

Use this checklist to help close the shelter.

General

Cleaning

- ☐ Clean areas of the facility that have been used during sheltering, per your supervisor's instructions; return the facility to as close to pre-disaster condition as possible.
- ☐ If you notice any damage, take pictures, if possible, and alert your supervisor immediately.
- ☐ Ensure that all equipment is properly cleaned, disposed of or returned to the appropriate place.

Reporting/Inventory

- ☐ Use the *Shelter Inventory* form and *Resource Record (Form 6455)* to take inventory and find out where items should be directed at closing.
- ☐ Make any final additions to the *Shelter Log*.

Registration

Reporting

- ☐ Upon clients' final departure, record a post-disaster address on the *Shelter Registration Form* and note that clients have left the shelter permanently.
- ☐ Make sure registration forms remain secure during the closing of the shelter.
- ☐ Ask your supervisor about the appropriate disposition for all forms, including the registration forms.

Supplies

- ☐ Restock the shelter supply kit, as instructed by your supervisor, using its initial inventory as your guide.

Providing information

Supplies

- ☐ Remove Red Cross posters, banners and signs from all areas of the shelter, including the exterior, using the signage log of locations. Save for reuse whenever possible.
- ☐ Remember to remove any Red Cross signage posted in and around the community directing people to the shelter.

Residents

- ☐ Communicate closing information to residents as soon as it is confirmed. Provide 48-hour notice, whenever possible. Provide both oral and written notice. Make sure all residents are notified, including those with functional, access and language needs.

☐ Communicate with residents one-on-one. If you learn that residents are experiencing barriers prohibiting them from leaving the shelter, communicate these concerns to your supervisor.

Dormitory

Cots

☐ When possible, clean and dry all cots per the manufacturing label or cot cleaning instructions, having shelter residents assist if possible.

☐ If a cot was set up, it should be cleaned whether it was slept on or not.

☐ If cleaning cots is not possible, clearly identify used and unused cots and keep them separated, so they can be cleaned upon return.

☐ Clearly mark any broken or incomplete cots.

Feeding

Residents

☐ Make sure residents know when the last meal will be served.

Supplies/Equipment

☐ If the facility's food supplies have been used, check with your supervisor to see if they should be restocked.

☐ Consult with your supervisor to determine disposition of excess food items and supplies, as well as how they should be packed.

☐ Keep perishable items separate from non-perishable items and separate food items from cleaning supplies.

☐ Make sure all equipment has been rinsed, washed, and sanitized. Special attention should be paid to the rubber gasket and nozzle heads of the food and beverage Cambros.

American Red Cross