



Seminole County  
Office of Emergency Management

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# Volunteer Packet

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January 2018



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# Volunteer Packet Instructions

Read over the contents of the entire packet carefully to familiarize yourself with our organization and its goals, and to ensure that you meet the necessary qualifications for volunteerism at our site.

Mail a copy of your resume to the emergency management office:

Seminole County Office of Emergency Management  
150 Eslinger Way  
Sanford, FL 32773

Complete a formal application.

Please contact the Seminole County Office of Emergency Management at (407) 665-5102, or by e-mail at [aharris@seminolecountyfl.gov](mailto:aharris@seminolecountyfl.gov) if you have any questions concerning volunteerism.

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# Introduction

Emergency Management is a comprehensive, integrated program of mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery, for emergencies/disasters of any kind. The field of Emergency Management, since its inception with the creation of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the late 1970's, has evolved to become the lead agency or entity, to coordinate multi-organizational community planning, response and recovery.

No public or private entity is immune to disasters and no single segment of society can meet the complex needs of a major emergency or disaster on its own. Through emergency management, effective partnerships are created and nurtured in advance of a disaster through the development of a proactive, comprehensive emergency operations plan. During a disaster, response and recovery efforts are coordinated from an Emergency Operations Center that is staffed by paid and volunteer personnel and representatives from all emergency service departments and agencies involved in operations.



Seminole County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is responsible for performing technical work in the development, implementation, and management of countywide disaster response, recovery, mitigation, risk reduction, prevention, and preparedness. The emergency management team manages and coordinates the Emergency Operations Center, with support from State and Federal organizations during times of emergency. OEM provides countywide planning, training and exercise programs in order to be prepared for natural, technological, and/or man-made emergencies.

As mentioned previously, Emergency management includes a four phase approach; mitigation preparedness, response, and recovery.

## Mitigation

- Includes any activities that prevent an emergency, reduce the chance of an emergency happening, or reduce the damaging effects of unavoidable emergencies.
- Buying flood and fire insurance for your home is a mitigation activity.
- Mitigation activities take place before and after emergencies.

## Preparedness

- Includes plans or preparations made to save lives and to help response and rescue operations.
- Evacuation plans and stocking food and water are both examples of preparedness.
- Preparedness activities take place before an emergency occurs.

## Response

- Includes actions taken to save lives and prevent further property damage in an emergency situation. Response is putting your preparedness plans into action.
- Seeking shelter from a tornado or turning off gas valves in an earthquake are both response activities.
- Response activities take place during an emergency.

## Recovery

- Includes actions taken to return to a normal or an even safer situation following an emergency.
- Recovery includes getting financial assistance to help pay for the repairs.
- Recovery activities take place after an emergency.

### **Mission**

Planning, training, exercising, and coordinating resources to ready our community for any emergency, while promoting a culture of preparedness that will ensure Seminole County is a safe place to work, live, and play.

### **Vision**

To be recognized internationally as a premier emergency management program dedicated to the safety and welfare of the public through the preservation of life, health, property, and the environment.

Through a cooperative effort with various local government entities, non-profit agencies and faith based organizations, develop the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP), Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), and Local Mitigation Strategy. The CEMP provides guidance for how agencies will respond threats or actual disasters in Seminole County. The COOP addresses continuation of critical functions if infrastructures are damaged due to an emergency. Finally, the LMS provides goals and objectives in an effort to strengthen critical infrastructure.

The Division of Emergency Management is responsible for the development and maintenance of plans that include evacuation, disaster housing, emergency shelters, debris management, damage assessments, and homeland security. The Division also provides guidance to its municipalities and support agencies on the development of disaster management plans.

Teaching citizens how to prepare themselves for disasters is critical to the resilience of Seminole County. Emergency management staff provides hours of lectures to student groups, homeowners associations, faith-based organizations, businesses, and various institutions and associations.

# Volunteer Application

|  |          |           |                         |        |          |
|--|----------|-----------|-------------------------|--------|----------|
| Full Name:   |          |           |                         |        |          |
| <i>Permanent Address:</i>  |          |           | <i>Present Address:</i> |        |          |
|  |          |           |                         |        |          |
|  |          |           |                         |        |          |
|  |          |           |                         |        |          |
| Telephone No.:   |          |           | Telephone No.:          |        |          |
| e-mail Address:  |          |           | Fax No.:                |        |          |
|  |          |           | e-mail Address:         |        |          |
| In case of emergency, notify:  |          |           |                         |        |          |
| Name:  |          |           |                         |        |          |
| Relationship:  |          |           |                         |        |          |
| Address:   |          |           |                         |        |          |
|  |          |           |                         |        |          |
| Telephone No.:   |          |           |                         |        |          |
| EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE   |          |           |                         |        |          |
| Current or Most Recent School Name:  |          |           |                         |        |          |
| Major/Minor:   |          |           |                         |        |          |
| Year:  | Freshman | Sophomore | Junior                  | Senior | Graduate |
| Other Colleges/Universities Attended ( <i>please include an unofficial or official transcript</i> ): |          |           |                         |        |          |
| Date Attended:   |          |           | Major/Minor:            |        |          |
| Degree or Number of Credits Earned:  |          |           |                         | GPA:   |          |

WORK/VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCE

Most Recent Employer:

Telephone Number:

Supervisor (Name & Title):

Position Title:

City, State:

Start Date:

End Date:

Description of Duties: *(Use an additional sheet if necessary)*

Employer:

Telephone Number:

Supervisor (Name & Title):

Position Title:

City, State:

Start Date:

End Date:

Description of Duties: *(Use an additional sheet if necessary)*

OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

What would you like to learn? Experience?

Please indicate your availability.

Would you be earning college credit? *(if yes, please see conditions listed on page 5)*

Yes

No

School Contact Information:

References: Please list up to two persons not related to you, who are familiar with your character and qualifications:

| Full name and title | Phone Number | Email Address |
|---------------------|--------------|---------------|
|                     |              |               |
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# Volunteer Program Guidelines

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## Goal

Seminole County understands that working with a volunteer is both a privilege and a responsibility. Volunteers can be incredible resources and give an extra pair of hands, provide new and innovative thinking, and enthusiasm to support business needs.

Seminole County can gain assistance and support at a time when our organization is growing, but not yet ready to add full or part time regular staff. We understand that volunteers bring a fresh look at the emergency management / homeland security field. A volunteer brings a new perspective, the vibrancy of new thoughts, and a sense of interest and learning. Finally, a volunteer brings needed diversity.

The goal is to have the volunteer learn as much about the business of emergency management as possible. Therefore the supervisor will take some time to visit with the individual regularly, development of a project list, and visit for updates. This will allow explanation of how emergency management functions in the community and why decisions are made. Seminole County Office of Emergency Management will move the volunteer around as much as possible within the organization to give the individual as many experiences as is possible. The Office of Emergency Management will observe performance and note any areas where improvement is needed.

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## Qualifications

Individual should have experience in public safety, emergency management or related field. A current or recent college level student, which is pursuing a degree/concentration, in the field Emergency Management/Public Administration receives high priority. In addition, the individual should be in good academic standing if in an accredited institution.

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## Dress Code

Seminole County's objective in establishing a business casual dress code is to allow our employees to work comfortably in the workplace. The public does not know the difference between an intern, volunteer and a paid staff member. Business casual dress is the standard for this dress code.

Because all casual clothing is not suitable for the office, these guidelines will help you determine what is appropriate to wear to work. Clothing that works well for the beach, yard work, dance clubs, exercise sessions, and sports contests may not be appropriate for a professional appearance at work.



Even in a business casual work environment, clothing should be pressed and never wrinkled. Torn, dirty, or frayed clothing is unacceptable. All seams must be finished. Any clothing that has words, terms, or pictures that may be offensive to other employees is unacceptable. Clothing that has the company logo is encouraged. Sports team, university, and fashion brand names on clothing are generally acceptable.

Certain days can be declared dress down days, generally Fridays. On these days, jeans and other more casual clothing, although never clothing potentially offensive to others, are allowed.

Slacks that are similar to Dockers and other makers of cotton or synthetic material pants, wool pants, flannel pants, dressy capris, and nice looking dress synthetic pants are acceptable. Inappropriate slacks or pants include jeans, sweatpants, exercise pants, Bermuda shorts, short shorts, shorts, bib overalls, leggings, and any spandex or other form-fitting pants such as people wear for biking.

Casual dresses and skirts, and skirts that are split at or below the knee are acceptable. Dress and skirt length should be at a length at which you can sit comfortably in public. Short, tight skirts that ride halfway up the thigh are inappropriate for work. Mini-skirts, skorts, sun dresses, beach dresses, and spaghetti-strap dresses are inappropriate for the office.

Casual shirts, dress shirts, sweaters, tops, golf-type shirts, and turtlenecks are acceptable attire for work. Inappropriate attire for work includes tank tops; midriff tops; shirts with potentially offensive words, terms, logos, pictures, cartoons, or slogans; halter-tops; tops with bare shoulders; sweatshirts, and t-shirts unless worn under another blouse, shirt, jacket, or dress.

Conservative athletic or walking shoes, loafers, clogs, sneakers, boots, flats, dress heels, and leather deck-type shoes are acceptable for work. Wearing no stockings is acceptable in warm weather. Flashy athletic shoes, thongs, flip-flops, slippers, and any shoe with an open toe are not acceptable in the office. Closed toe and closed heel shoes are required in the emergency command centers and operational areas.

Should be in good taste, with limited visible body piercing. Remember, that some employees are allergic to the chemicals in perfumes and make-up, so wear these substances with restraint.

Hats are not appropriate in the office. Head Covers that are required for religious purposes or to honor cultural tradition are allowed. Hats and caps are acceptable in the field as long as no offensive language is on the hat or cap.

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## **Work Schedule**

Seminole County recognizes the need to be service oriented in providing established administrative services to a diverse group of customers. Therefore, it sets the standard business hours for administrative offices as Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., including an hour in the middle of the day for lunch. A decision to maintain a

different permanent schedule should be based on the customers' needs for access and must be approved by the appropriate supervisor. The facility holds the investigative unit for law enforcement and both 9-1-1 centers. All doors lock down promptly between 5:00pm and reopen at 8:00am. Offices remain open and staffed during standard business hours.

Exceptions to this policy include disaster operations. When the Emergency Operations Center is activated, emergency management staff, volunteers, non-profit and faith-based representative must gain access to the building to coordinate response. Business hours are adjusted for these emergencies. Volunteers will only be permitted to work during normal operational hours with the exception of a disaster operation or a special activity outside of the building. These activities include public outreach programs, workshops, seminars, trainings, and exercises.

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## **Requirements for Completing Volunteerism**

Volunteers deserve a true introduction to emergency management that gives them experience in a number of areas related to their interests. Seminole County OEM will coordinate a written developmental plan based on the volunteer's interest. Similar to a job description, the plan lays out a developmental path with specific outcomes.

This gives the volunteer a good picture of what their experience will encompass in emergency management. The written plan also provides a guide path for how the department will utilize the volunteer. The written plan lays out the responsibilities of the employer to provide developmental opportunities for the volunteer including meetings to attend, projects to work on, time spent with various staff members, and job tasks to learn.

At the completion of the volunteer opportunity, Seminole County OEM suggests all volunteers complete the following:

1. At least one exercise (tabletop, functional, or full-scale) experience.
2. At least one FEMA or State level emergency management course.
3. Attendance in at least one State or Federal emergency management meeting with other professional emergency management/homeland security practitioners.
4. At least one special outside activity dealing with the public.
5. At least one project involving a planning activity.
6. At least one project or involvement in the mitigation projects.
7. Opportunities to complete FEMA's Professional Development Series (PDS).
8. Networking opportunities with other emergency managers.

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# Scope of Work

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## **Volunteer Responsibilities**

- Make arrangements for transportation. Emergency Management may assist with this task as they are more familiar with the housing/transportation situation in the community.
- Attend and complete any training programs.
- Adhere to the policies and duties outlined by Seminole County.
- Affiliate with a professional organization in the student's area of interest or specialization, Florida Emergency Preparedness Association and/or International Emergency Management Agency.
- Perform work assignments to the best of ability.
- Assist/create with exercise design and development.
- Help provide public information and outreach.
- Assisting staff in the day-to-day operations.
- Answering inquiries by phone and through written communications.
- Preparing documents and reports.
- Assisting with research assignments and special projects.
- Attending meetings or community events.

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## **Agency Responsibilities**

- The agency is expected to provide volunteer with an atmosphere in which they will develop their professional and personal growth.
- Set up an initial conference with the volunteer to determine their specific needs and adapt the training program to meet those needs.
- Assist volunteer with developing goals and objectives.
- Confer with the volunteer at least once a week to arrange schedules, discuss work performance and to correct any problems that may arise.
- Inform the volunteer of all personnel policies and procedures.
- Evaluate performance and provide feedback
- Provide a wonderful opportunity to develop that first, and possibly career-long relationship, with an individual who cares about and is committed to their success.

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# Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is this a paid or unpaid?  
More than likely it will be an unpaid, but you should always ask!
2. How long is the term of the volunteer program?  
The term is a minimum of 3 months on a flexible schedule. It works to accomplish the requirement for your volunteerism hours as well as to provide support to the office on a weekly basis.
3. What is an average day like for a volunteer?  
Some days are busier than others. One day you may have a meeting in the morning, an ongoing project you are following up on all day, project deadline meeting in the afternoon, phone calls to forward or respond to, and research to conduct. Another day you may have a very slow day. Not as many phone calls coming in, no meetings and just one tedious project you get to work on. However, tedious does not mean not important. Every task that is done is important in one way or another. Every day you learn something new and gain experience and networking contacts that will help you in the organization. The office is a team environment and that is every day. There is always someone to help out, answer questions you may not know the answers to, and encourage you along the way.
4. Will this volunteer program lead to a potential job?  
Finding a job is ultimately up to you, with that being said, this program can help open doors either through; gaining valuable contact information of potential employers or by helping you gain experience you might not get during your college years.
5. What would be my responsibilities?  
Responsibilities could range from working on a special needs plan, to creating a floodplain survey to developing a packet summarizing the States local emergency management statutes.
6. What kind of projects might be asked of me?  
There are number of projects that are ongoing such as: spreadsheet updates, plans, response activities, correspondences with internal and external people and organizations, as well as other projects which can include training, exercises, and attending events to represent the Office of Emergency Management.

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# Why Volunteer?

**EMPLOYMENT:** Volunteers stand out when job hunting for they will have some experience.

**VALUE:** Volunteering is important and valuable. The Office of Emergency Management can do much more with help from concerned citizens.

**THEORY INTO PRACTICE:** A volunteer experience can add meaning to study by giving you the chance to apply theories to "real world" situations.

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:** The volunteer will develop an awareness of others' needs and a great understanding of his/her contributions to society.

**PERSONAL GROWTH:** The volunteer will grow from the experience. Having to solve problems in unfamiliar situations can increase self-confidence and self-esteem.

**HELPING HAND:** Helping others in need benefits the community and makes a difference.

**NEW ENVIRONMENT:** Volunteering introduces you to a new environment and the challenges and problems of a work setting. The volunteer will learn the meaning of teamwork.

**RESEARCH:** It's an opportunity for experimentation and exploration of new and old interests.

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon acceptance of participating in Volunteer Program, all volunteers are expected to follow the guidelines below:

1. Adhering to company work hours and all company policies and procedures.
2. Adhering to company policies governing the observation of confidentiality and the handling of confidential information.
3. Assuming personal and professional responsibilities for his/her actions and activities.
4. Maintaining professional relationships with company employees, customers and so forth.
5. Relating and applying knowledge acquired in the academic setting to the company setting.
6. Being consistent and punctual in the submission of all work assignments to your supervision.

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Signature

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Print Name

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Date