FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Disaster Service Worker Volunteer Program

	OATH	
1	How can the loyalty oath be administered?	Oath administration may be fulfilled in one of two methods at the discretion of the ADC. The two methods are self-certification and officer administered. **Self-Certification:** volunteer reads oath and self-certifies by signing oath, under penalty of perjury, consistent with Civil Code §2015.5. **Officer Administered:** volunteer takes and subscribes to oath before an officer with oath administration authority.
2	Who can administer the loyalty oath?	An officer authorized to administer oaths, such as elected officials, city/county clerks, or notary publics. Also, Department heads of State Agencies, including Cal OES Director and to any officer of OES to whom the Director delegates this authority. County/city ordinances and local rules may also dictate who has delegation authority. Consult local legal counsel regarding your jurisdiction's specific laws and ordinances.
3	Do you need to be a US citizen to take the oath?	A non United States citizen may take the loyalty oath; however, the person may need to research whether subscribing to the loyalty oath has any impact on his/her own country's allegiance.
4	Who in the Accredited Disaster Council (ADC) may administer oath or delegate its authority? What is the procedure and documentation?	An ADC member does not inherently have authority to administer the oath by virtue of being a member. Any ADC member may have the authority as stated in law. (Gov. Code, §3104.) Procedure varies according to the ADC. Documentation must be in writing. Consult local legal counsel regarding your jurisdiction's specific laws and ordinances.
5	Can a volunteer be delegated oath authority?	Delegating the authority to administer the oath may be permitted. Consult local legal counsel regarding your jurisdiction's specific laws and ordinances.
6	Must volunteer be in presence of the officer giving the oath?	Yes, if the ADC elects the Officer Administered method of oath administration.
7	Can the oath be administered remotely via online, telephone, or video?	No. If the ADC elects the Officer Administered method of oath administration, then the DSW volunteer must be present for oath administration.
8	Who subscribes to the loyalty oath if minors are registered?	If the ADC or its designee decides to register minors, the minor must subscribe to the loyalty oath, not the parent or legal guardian. (Gov. Code, §3102(a).)
9	What is the effective period of an oath subscription for the DSW volunteer?	The oath subscription is effective for the period the DSW volunteer remains a member with the authorized registering entity. (Gov. Code, §3102.)

10	Can the oath be retained electronically rather than in hardcopy?	The oath may be retained electronically provided a signed statement by the person (who scanned the DSW records) is on file to substantiate original records were reproduced.
11	When can the oath be destroyed?	The oath can be destroyed five years after the DSW volunteer's service has been terminated. (Gov. Code, §3105(e).)
	REGISTRATION	
1	Can non-US citizens be registered as DSW volunteers?	An individual does not have to be a United States citizen to become a DSW volunteer; however, one of the registration requirements is to take and subscribe to the loyalty oath. It is recommended the non-citizen considers whether subscribing to another country's oath has any impact on their own country's allegiance.
2	Is a volunteer considered registered after he/she subscribes to the loyalty oath?	Oath subscription is only one of the requirements to comply with a valid registration. To be properly registered as a DSW volunteer, the ADC or authorized registering agency must have the name and address of the registrant, date of enrollment, name of registering entity with signature and title of authorized person, classification, and oath subscription. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 19, §2573.1.)
3	Can minors be registered as DSW volunteers?	Minors may be registered as DSW volunteers. If the ADC decides to register minors, the minor must subscribe to the oath and his/her parent or legal guardian must provide written consent for the minor's participation in disaster service duties.
4	Does minor's parent or legal guardian take the oath?	No. Only the DSW volunteer is required to take and subscribe to the oath. (Gov. Code, §3102(a).)
5	Can one registration form be used to register a group of people for a training activity?	A group registration is allowed provided the form created for this purpose includes all regulatory information as well as incorporation of the loyalty oath. Each volunteer must provide an original signature for the oath subscription along with a section dedicated for the authorized oath official's signature and title. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 19, §2573.1.)
6	If a person is volunteering in County A as a SAR member and also volunteering in County B as a CERT member, does the person need to register with both Counties?	Yes, since County A and County B have different jurisdictional responsibilities and authority for the DSW volunteer performing disaster service duties at the direction and supervision of each respective County.
7	Are background checks required as part of the DSW registration process?	It is not a requirement. However, the ADC or its designee may implement the requirement and conduct a background check of its members.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Disaster Service Worker Volunteer Program

	SUPERVISION	
1	Is supervision required?	Supervision of DSW volunteers is required for all authorized disaster service activities, including training.
2	Who can supervise DSW activities?	The ADC or its designee determines who acts in a supervisory capacity. Both paid staff and volunteers may serve in this role.
3	How is supervision performed?	Supervision may be performed onsite or offsite as determined by the ADC or its designee.
4	What training and experience should the person have to be a supervisor?	The criteria for who is selected to supervise a DSW activity is determined by the ADC or its designee. Considerations may include: prior supervisory experience, related training, education, or worker's compensation knowledge.
	CLASSIFICATION	
1	What classification is selected if volunteer used in role of disaster survivor during an exercise?	Enter the same classification as the one being trained/exercised (e.g.*CERT Exercise, CERT classification).*
2	If DSW duties overlap, what classification should be used?	More than one classification may be entered on a single registration to capture the disaster service duties the DSW volunteer will perform (e.g. *CERT and Communications).*
3	If a volunteer is used in more than one classification, is a separate registration required for each one?	Only one registration is required. Multiple classifications may be entered on a single registration if the volunteer is being trained and utilized for different disaster service duties (e.g. *EOC and Animal Rescue and Shelter).*
	MUTUAL AID	
1	Are DSW volunteers covered under the Program if they are used in mutual aid deployments?	DSW volunteers are eligible for Program benefits when officially activated to perform disaster service duties in support of a mutual aid deployment. A valid DSW registration and compliance with all Program regulations are required.
2	What agency is responsible for submitting the claim for an injured DSW volunteer?	Both the requesting and sending agencies are responsible for an injured DSW volunteer's claim submission. Both agencies coordinate efforts to meet worker's compensation time lines.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Disaster Service Worker Volunteer Program

	TRAINING	
1	What training, course work, classes, and/or qualifications are required for DSW volunteers?	The training, curriculum, licensing, and credentialing requirements are determined by the ADC or authorized registering authority. Each classification has a different scope of duties, which dictates a certain skill set, proficiency, and or licensing for volunteers to succeed at performing their disaster service duties. Minimum recommendations are basic first aid, Incident Command System, Standardized Emergency Management System, National Incident Management System, other related emergency management training.
2	Are 'victim' or 'survivor' volunteers for an exercise covered under the DSW Program?	Yes, provided the volunteer is registered as a DSW volunteer and adheres to all Program requirements.
3	Can one registration form be used for registering a group of volunteers for an exercise?	Yes, provided the group form includes all required registration fields including a section for the loyalty oath subscription for each volunteer's signature. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 19, §2573.1.)
4	Can preparedness and planned events be approved as training?	Preparedness and planned events are not considered eligible training activities under the Program. Exception: A planned event which provides a unique opportunity to train in an environment which cannot be duplicated in the classroom or the field may be eligible. Example: A parade, in which different emergency response disciplines are present, provides an environment to practice highly technical skills and use specialized communication equipment to test interoperability capabilities.
5	Does the DSW Program pay for training related expenses?	The DSW Program does not provide any funding for training expenses. The funding is authorized to pay worker's compensation benefits, i.e. disability benefits, death benefits, survivor benefits, reimbursement of eligible medical expenses, and other related benefits on behalf of injured DSW volunteers and eligible dependents.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Disaster Service Worker Volunteer Program

ACCREDITED DISASTER COUNCIL (ADC)		
1	How is DSW training pre-approved if the ADC is not meeting?	The ADC's bylaws, local ordinances, or other document may address this topic and identify a Council member who has the authority to pre-approve DSW trainings in the absence of a meeting. The method and procedure will vary by jurisdiction.
2	Can any ADC member delegate DSW Program administration to another government entity?	It depends on the ADC and its business operations as to who is identified and authorized to execute this action, which may be addressed in local ordinances, by-laws, charters, or other similar authority The procedures for delegation will vary by jurisdiction.
3	Who has oath administration authority in the ADC?	ADC members do not automatically have oath authority by virtue of being a member. State and local laws dictate who has oath administration authority. Consult with local counsel regarding your jurisdiction's specific laws and ordinances.
FILING AND RECORDKEEPING		
1	Who should file the DSW records?	The DSW registration with oath subscription must be filed according to legal requirements and the government entity that registered DSW volunteers. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 19 §2573.2.) The authorized registering entity is also responsible for designating a person with this duty.
2	Can County OES retain DSW records on behalf of the County Clerk?	County OES may be designated in writing by the County Clerk as the repository for the records, which facilitates access to these required documents when a claim is filed. It would be prudent for the County Clerk to also retain copies.
3	How often should DSW records be updated?	The timeline for updating records is at the discretion of the ADC or the authorized registering agency. No mandated schedule exists; however, records should be updated to reflect current contact information and other changes, which may affect timely claim's processing.
BACKGROUND CHECKS		
1	Are background checks required in order to become a DSW volunteer?	The DSW Program does not require background checks; however, the ADC or its authorized registering agency may require one for their volunteers or for a given DSW classification. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 19, §2572.1.)
2	Who pays for the background checks?	The DSW Program does not provide reimbursement for background checks. The ADC or the registering agency may have funding allocated for this purpose.

MISCELLANEOUS		
1	Can community colleges register students as DSW volunteers to assist in campus disasters?	A community college security or law enforcement unit, such as campus police or emergency management department, may request DSW Program administration from its local city or county ADC to register students as DSW volunteers.
2	Can tribal members be registered as DSW volunteers?	Tribal members may become registered DSW volunteers by a local ADC or its authorized designee. In taking such action, the individuals agree to follow the ADC's rules/authority and the DSW Program Regulations.
3	Who has authority to impress a person into service and under what conditions may this be executed?	Unregistered persons may be impressed into service during a state of war emergency, a state of emergency, or a local emergency by a person having authority to command the aid of citizens in the execution of his or her duties. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 19, §2570.2(a)(2); Lab. Code, §3211.92(b).) Persons authorized to command emergency aid must be granted such authority by statute or ordinance or must have emergency duties from which such authority may reasonably be implied. Consult with local counsel regarding your jurisdiction's specific laws and ordinances.