



# MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 6, 2024  
TO: Department Heads  
CC: Z-County Everyone  
FROM: Sonia M. De La Rosa, County Administrative Officer  
SUBJECT: **County of Monterey Disaster Service Worker Program**

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*Signature*

The protection of the health and safety and preservation of the lives and property of the people of the County of Monterey from the effects of natural or manmade emergencies which result in conditions of disaster or in extreme peril to life, property, and resources is of paramount local importance. In times of emergency, the County must be prepared to quickly respond in order to maintain critical functions and deliver services to residents affected by the emergency.

As we have learned over the past three years, an emergency can affect an entire region as we saw with the 2023 Winter Storms, the 2020 Carmel and River Wildfires, and the entire country such as the case with COVID-19. In some emergency situations mutual aid resources may not be available or adequate. The greatest asset of the County is our workforce. Having a capable and accessible DSW workforce allows the County to act as good stewards of local taxpayer dollars by using internal resources instead of contracting for outside resources at a significant cost.

In furtherance of the exercise of the authority of the County in protection of its citizens and resources and in accordance with California Government Code 3100, all County employees are designated as Disaster Service Workers subject to deployment to emergency response efforts assigned to them by their superiors or by law. With the Disaster Service Worker (DSW) program, the County has an engaged workforce to provide ample support and training to quickly respond to disasters as they arise and minimize costs of bringing in resources from other areas. Pursuant to this directive, the following instructions shall be implemented by all Department Heads.

## Disaster Service Workers

One of the highest responsibilities for all public employees is to assist in preserving the life and property of the residents of our County. As public employees, County of Monterey employees are Disaster Service Workers and may be called upon in the event of a disaster (CA Gov. Code, §3101). The roles and responsibilities for Disaster Service Workers are authorized by the California Emergency Services Act and are defined in the California Government Code 3100-3102; Labor Code 3211.92(b).

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The County's Disaster Service Worker Program is administered jointly by the County's Department of Emergency Management and the Human Resources Department under the authority of the County Administrative Officer. These departments will collaborate to identify County employees who possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities for deployment to specific emergency response activities as Disaster Service Workers.

The County Administrative Office authorizes the Human Resources Department and the Department of Emergency Management to collaborate directly with Department Heads to secure the necessary staff to assist with the emergency response efforts. The County Administrative Officer holds the ultimate authority to identify and deploy any County employee as a Disaster Service Worker for purposes of responding to a declared emergency.

### Emergency and Disaster Duties

Each Disaster Service Worker in any classification shall, without regard to a formal designation or assignment, be considered to be acting within the scope of disaster service duties while assisting any unit of the County of Monterey Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Disaster Service Workers may perform duties to contribute to the protection of life or property or mitigating the effects of an emergency or potential emergency under the authorization of a duly constituted superior in the emergency organization.

During a disaster, some departments will respond in their traditional roles (such as law enforcement). Other departments may be required to perform their day-to-day tasks as well as other duties to support the activities of the EOC. During a time of emergency, non-essential employees may perform regular duties or may have alterations to their duties. Staff may also be asked to take on tasks outside of their normal responsibilities to work in support of emergency operations, assist with support functions at a disaster site, coordinate information about the disaster or available public services, and other activities needed to effectively respond to the emergency in your community. Examples of how the work of County staff may be altered during an emergency response period include:

- Performing usual services, under a different work schedule or in a different location. For example: providing disaster victims with government services, such as medical aid, shelter, commodities, housing, or other assistance.
- Emergency response related activities associated with the program in which staff normally work (those who work in programs with statutory response responsibilities during an incident). For example: Lab Technicians; Epidemiologists; Environmental Health Monitors; Food, Safety and Health Officers, Contract Managers, Public Information Officers, Finance Staff, and Program Managers.
- Using professional skills and abilities to go beyond normal daily tasks. For example: Public Health Nurses, Physicians, and other medical professionals may be asked to deliver healthcare and/or perform triage.
- Support emergency operations in the County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC), or in their Department's Operation Center (DOC). EOC tasks may include assisting with purchasing, record keeping, analyzing information, answering phones, supporting emergency response, writing press releases, monitoring media, and processing requests for supplies.

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Employees who do not have a specific Disaster Service Worker assignment, ~~and who have not received specific training,~~ may be asked to perform other duties to include:

- Answering telephones
- Ordering / Delivering supplies
- Managing volunteers
- Monitoring news reports
- Picking up tree limbs
- Staffing barricades
- Food Distribution
- Tracking information in the EOC
- Translation for non-English speakers
- Helping in an emergency shelter
- Filling sandbags
- Other tasks as needed

### Assignment Identification

All County of Monterey Disaster Service Workers are expected to serve the community during disasters; this includes full-time, part-time, permanent, and/or limited term employees. When possible, Disaster Service Workers are provided the opportunity to volunteer for preferred assignments. The County Administrative Officer, Director of Emergency Management, and the Director of Human Resources reserve the right to assign any and all Disaster Service Workers to an assignment within the County to support response and recovery operations, regardless of preference.

All Disaster Service Workers must register their interest in one of the following assignments within 30 days of the issuance of this directive:

- **Service in the Field:** Some DSWs may be called upon or choose to work in the field providing direct services to communities affected by disasters.
- **Emergency Operations Center (EOC):** Some DSWs may be called upon or choose to work in the Monterey County Emergency Operations Center. The EOC is a physical or virtual location from which DSWs of a jurisdiction or organization coordinate information and resources to support incident management activities (on-scene operations).
- **Continuity of Operations (COOP):** Some DSWs may be called upon to work within their home agency to provide for the continuity of operations while other DSWs are responding to an emergency or disaster. COOP is necessary for ensuring and performing the continuation of essential and/or mandated government functions. This includes Departments which provide emergency services in normal day-to-day operations including, but not limited to, the Monterey County Sheriff's Office, Emergency Communications Department, Natividad Medical Center, Public Works, Facilities, and Parks, and Department of Emergency Management.

### Loyalty Oath

All Disaster Service Workers shall, before they enter upon the duties of their employment, take and subscribe to the Loyalty Oath. Article XX, Section 3 of the California Constitution requires all public officers and employees to take an Loyalty Oath. The Loyalty Oath may be taken before any officer authorized to administer oaths. The language of the Loyalty Oath is included below:

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*I, \_\_\_\_\_, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of California against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of California; that I take this obligation freely, without mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties upon which I am about to enter.*

### Disaster Service Worker Status Affirmation Form

In addition to Disaster Service Workers swearing and signing the Loyalty Oath, DSWs shall review and sign a DSW Status Addirmation Form outlining and acknowledging the duties and responsibility of Disaster Service Workers. See Attachment A for the Disaster Service Worker Status Affirmation Form. All Disaster Service Workers will sign the DSW Status Affirmation Form upon employment with the County and will re-certify the Acknowledgment every five (5) years.

### Training Requirements

It is critical to train public employees to respond in a disaster. All County Employees, must satisfactorily complete an initial County of Monterey Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Disaster Service Worker Training Course, including periodic refresher training within 365 days of the issuance of this directive. In addition, all permanent full-time employees are required to complete IS-100 and IS-200. Required trainings are outlined below:

- County of Monterey Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Disaster Service Worker Introduction Training Course **(Online)**

**AND**

- IS-100: Introduction to the Incident Command System **(Online)**
- IS-200: Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response **(Online)**

**OR**

- IS-100/IS-200 Combined Course **(In-Person)**

The initial DSW Introduction training will be provided to all employees as part of the employee onboarding process and will be available online or in-person. DSWs have the option of taking the [IS-100](#) and [IS-200](#) courses available online or participating in a two hour in person IS-100/IS-200 training course which will fulfill the requirement for both courses hosted by the Department of Emergency Management.

All permanent full-time employees must complete the required trainings within 365 days of the issuance of this directive. All Disaster Service Workers must complete an EOC/DSW refresher training every five (5) years.

Additional training is required for the following Disaster Service Worker roles/assignments:

- Employees with a pre-defined disaster response role (e.g., Department Operation Center (DOC) assignment, Department Safety Officer, Floor Warden/Coordinator, all public safety and emergency response personnel)
- Supervisors responsible for field operations and all individuals with an assignment in an Incident Command Post (ICP), Department Operation Center (DOC), or the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

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- Personnel responsible to fill Command, Management, or General Staff positions in an Incident Command Post (ICP), Department Operation Center (DOC), or the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
- Department Managers and Directors with responsibility for Public Safety, Emergency Response, Emergency Management, Medical, and Public Health services.

The Department of Emergency Management (DEM) shall ensure disaster training is approved, documented and supervised, and shall ensure disaster training is commensurate with the duties of the disaster service worker.

### New Employee Onboarding and Orientation

The Department of Human Resources is responsible for all new employee onboarding and orientation. As such, upon issuance of this directive, the Department of Human Resources will provide the following resources during New Employee Onboarding:

- **Loyalty Oath:** All new employees will swear and sign the Loyalty Oath to be administered by the Department of Human Resources upon onboarding.
- **DSW Pamphlet:** All new employees will receive a Disaster Service Worker information pamphlet provided by the Department of Emergency Management.
- **DSW Affirmation Form:** All new employees upon onboarding with Human Resources, will be provided and must complete the Disaster Service Worker Acknowledgement Form.
- **DSW Registration:** All new employees upon onboarding with Human Resources, will receive instruction and must complete registration in the Disaster Service Worker WebApp.

The Department of Emergency Management is responsible for the training of Disaster Service Workers. As such, upon issuance of this directive, the Department of Emergency Management will provide the County of Monterey Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Disaster Service Worker Introduction Training Course at all new employee orientations. Additionally, the mandatory DSW training will be included in the Annual Countywide Mandatory Training summary sheet provided at NEO.

### Disaster Service Worker Deployment

Disaster Service Worker deployment and demobilization is managed by the Personnel Branch of the EOC Logistics Section, staffed by the Human Resources Department. The decision to deploy Disaster Service Workers is done at the direction of County Administrative Officer and Director of Emergency Management.

### Local Emergency Pay

Disaster Service Workers will be paid in accordance with applicable Memorandum of Understanding provisions and County personnel policies and procedures.

### Workers Compensation

The County of Monterey ensures access for County employees -acting as Disaster Service Workers -to workers' compensation benefits. This program is made available to protect those workers from financial loss as a result of injuries sustained while engaged in disaster service activities and to provide immunity from liability while providing disaster service. Employees serving as Disaster Service Workers are covered by the

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County of Monterey's Workers' Compensation program.

The County of Monterey Human Resources Department and County Counsel will coordinate to process Worker's Compensation Claims. Worker's compensation claims for injuries sustained by Disaster Service Workers while performing disaster service shall be filed under the same authorities and guidelines as claims filed by all employees. The claim shall include: a completed workers' compensation claim form (DWC-1); employer's report of injury form (5020) as prescribed by the State Compensation Insurance Fund; a written narrative account of the incident that may include witness statements; and a copy of the claimant's current Disaster Service Worker registration form indicating the Loyalty Oath was administered.

### Records Management

An employees shall be deemed to be registered if the following information is on file in the Monterey County Disaster Service Worker Web Application.

1. Name of the employee.
2. Address of the employee.
3. Contact Information in the County Employee Self Service Web portal.
4. Preference of disaster service to which the employee may be deployed.
5. Preferred deployment schedule.

Documented proof of professional certification or licensing may also be requested. The specific employee shall be responsible for keeping their registration current and accurate.

Documented proof of the Loyalty Oath of any Disaster Service Worker is an integral part of an injury claim for workers' compensation. File retention should follow the same rules as other public personnel records. The Loyalty Oath shall be filed in the employee's personnel file.

It is critical to maintain a complete and current listing of employee contact information in order to contact Disaster Service Workers in the event of a catastrophic emergency. Following the issuance of this directive, the Information Technology Department and the Auditor Controllers Office will work with the Department of Emergency Management to add employee up-to-date employee contact information into the County Alert and Warning System.

### Review Date

This memo will be reviewed by the County Administrative Office, Department of Emergency Management, and Department of Human Resources in February of 2028, or after significant emergencies or disasters when appropriate.

Attachment A

Affirmation Of Disaster Service Worker Status Form

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