

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
STATEWIDE MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT
FOR
EMERGENCY AND DISASTER RESPONSE/RECOVERY

THIS AGREEMENT IS ENTERED INTO BETWEEN THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA AND BY AND AMONG EACH COUNTY, MUNICIPALITY, POLITICAL SUBDIVISION, STATE AGENCY, AND EMERGENCY SERVICE ENTITY THAT EXECUTES AND ADOPTS THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS CONTAINED HEREIN, BASED UPON THE FOLLOWING FACTS:

WHEREAS, the South Carolina Constitution, Article VIII, Section 13, provides that any county, incorporated municipality, or other political subdivision may agree with the State or with any other political subdivision for the joint administration of any function and exercise of powers and the sharing of the costs thereof; and

WHEREAS, the South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 25-1-450, requires that State, county, and municipal governments shall cooperate in developing and maintaining a plan for mutual assistance in emergencies; and

WHEREAS, the South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 6-11-1810, provides that any municipality, fire district, fire protection agency, or other emergency service entity may provide mutual aid assistance, upon request, from any other municipality, fire district, fire protection agency, or other emergency service delivery system in South Carolina at the time of a significant incident such as fire, earthquake, hurricane, flood, tornado, hazardous material event, or other such disaster; and

WHEREAS, the State of South Carolina is geographically vulnerable to hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding, other natural disasters, and technological or other hazards that in the past have caused severe disruption of essential human services and severe property damage to public roads, utilities, buildings, parks, and other government-owned facilities; and

WHEREAS the Parties to this Agreement recognize that additional personnel and equipment may be needed to mitigate further damage and restore vital services to the citizens of the affected community should such disasters occur; and

WHEREAS, to provide the most effective mutual aid possible, each Participating Government intends to foster communications with the personnel of the other Participating Government by visits, compilation of asset inventories, exchange of information, and development of plans and procedures to implement this Agreement;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Parties hereto agree as follows:

SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS

A. AGREEMENT - the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement for emergency and disaster response/recovery. Counties, municipalities, political subdivisions, state agencies, and emergency service entities of the State of South Carolina may become a party to this Agreement by executing a copy of this Agreement and providing a copy with original signatures and, when necessary, the authorizing resolution(s) to the State of South Carolina Emergency Management Division (hereinafter referred to as "SCEMD"). Copies of the Agreement with original signatures shall be filed and maintained at SCEMD in West Columbia, South Carolina.

B. REQUESTING PARTY - the Participating Government entity requesting aid in the event of an emergency.

C. ASSISTING PARTY - the Participating Government entity furnishing equipment, services, and/or personnel to the Requesting Party.

D. AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE - an employee of a Participating Government who is authorized in writing by that government to request, offer, or provide assistance under the terms of this Agreement. The list of Authorized Representatives for the Participating Government executing this Agreement shall be attached as Exhibit A and shall be updated as needed by each Participating Government.

E. SCEMD - the South Carolina Emergency Management Division, Office of the Adjutant General.

F. EMERGENCY - any occurrence, or threat thereof, whether natural or caused by man, in war or in peace, which results in or which may result in, substantial injury or harm to the population, or substantial damage to or loss of property.

G. DISASTER - any natural, technological, or civil emergency that causes or threatens damage of sufficient severity and magnitude that exceeds the capabilities of the local, county, or state governments.

H. PARTICIPATING GOVERNMENT - any county, municipality, political subdivision, state agency, or emergency service entity of the State of South Carolina which executes this Agreement and supplies a complete executed copy, as stated herein, to SCEMD.

I. PERIOD OF ASSISTANCE - the period of time beginning with the departure of any personnel of the Assisting Party, from any point, for the purpose of traveling to the Requesting Party in order to provide assistance and ending upon the return of all personnel and equipment of the Assisting Party, after providing the assistance requested, to their residence or regular place of work, whichever occurs first. The Period of Assistance shall not include any portion of the trip to the Requesting Party or the return trip from the Requesting Party, during which the personnel of the Assisting Party are engaged in a course of conduct not reasonably necessary for their safe arrival at, or return from, the Requesting Party.

J. WORK OR WORK-RELATED PERIOD - any period of time in which both the personnel or equipment of the Assisting Party is being used by the Requesting Party to provide assistance and for which the Requesting Party will reimburse the Assisting Party. Specifically included within such periods of time are rest breaks after which the personnel of the Assisting Party shall return to active work within a reasonable time. Specifically excluded from such periods of time are breakfast, lunch, and dinner breaks.

SECTION 2. PROCEDURES

When a Participating Government either becomes affected by or is under imminent threat of a disaster or emergency, it may invoke emergency-related mutual aid assistance either by: 1) submitting, in writing, a request for mutual aid to the Assisting Party, 2) by orally communicating a request for mutual aid assistance to the Assisting Party or to SCEMD, followed as soon as practicable by written confirmation of said request, or 3) by submitting a resource request to SCEMD with the intent for SCEMD to facilitate coordination of mutual aid by matching available resources to the Requesting Party. Mutual aid shall not be requested by any Participating Government unless resources available within the stricken area are deemed inadequate by that Participating Government. Requests for State or Federal emergency response assistance shall be made in accordance with the State Emergency Operations Plan. All requests for mutual aid shall be transmitted by the Authorized Representative or the Director of the County Emergency Management Agency. Requests for assistance may be communicated either to SCEMD or directly to an Assisting Party.

A. REQUESTS DIRECTLY TO ASSISTING PARTY: The Requesting Party may directly contact the Authorized Representative of the Assisting Party and shall provide them with the information in Paragraph C below. All communications shall be conducted directly between Requesting Party and Assisting Party. Each party shall be responsible for keeping SCEMD advised of the status of the response activities.

B. REQUESTS ROUTED THROUGH, OR ORIGINATING FROM SCEMD: The Requesting Party may directly contact SCEMD, in which case it shall provide SCEMD with the information in Paragraph C below. SCEMD may then contact other Participating Governments on behalf of the Requesting Party and coordinate the provision of mutual aid. SCEMD shall not be responsible for costs associated with such indirect requests for assistance, unless SCEMD so indicates in writing at the time it transmits the request to the Assisting Party. In no event shall SCEMD or the State of South Carolina be responsible for costs associated with assistance in the absence of appropriated funds. In all cases, the party receiving the mutual aid shall be solely responsible for the costs incurred by any Assisting Party providing assistance pursuant to the provisions of this Agreement.

C. REQUIRED INFORMATION: Each request for assistance shall be accompanied by the following information to the extent known:

1. A general description of the current situation;
2. Identification of the function for which assistance is needed (e.g., fire, law enforcement, emergency medical, transportation, communications, public works and engineering, building inspection, planning and information assistance, mass care, resource support, health and other medical services, search, and rescue, etc.) and the type of assistance needed.
3. Identification of the public infrastructure system for which assistance is needed (e.g., sanitary sewer, potable water, streets, or storm water systems) and the type of work assistance needed;
4. The amount and type of personnel, equipment, materials, and supplies needed, and a reasonable estimate of the length of time they will be needed;
5. The need for sites, structures, or buildings outside the Requesting Party's jurisdictional boundaries to serve as relief centers or staging areas for incoming emergency goods and services;
6. An estimated time and a specific place for a representative of the Requesting Party to meet the personnel and equipment of any Assisting Party; and
7. An estimate of expected costs from the Assisting Party to include any incidental expenses the Assisting Party expects to recoup from the Requesting Party.

This information may be provided on the form attached as Exhibit B, or by any other available means. SCEMD may revise the format of Exhibit B subsequent to the execution of this Agreement.

D. ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES AND ABILITY TO RENDER ASSISTANCE: When contacted by a Requesting Party or SCEMD, the Authorized Representative of any Participating Government agrees to assess and determine availability of personnel, equipment, and other resources to render assistance. All Participating Governments shall render assistance to the extent that personnel, equipment, and resources are available. Each Participating Government agrees to render assistance in accordance with the terms of this Agreement to the fullest extent possible. When the Authorized Representative determines that his/her Participating Government has available personnel, equipment, or other resources, the Authorized Representative shall so notify the Requesting Party or SCEMD, whichever communicated the request, and provide the information below. SCEMD shall, upon response from sufficient Participating Governments to meet the needs of the Requesting Party, notify the Authorized Representative of the Requesting Party and provide him/her with the following information to the extent known:

1. A complete description of the personnel, equipment, and materials to be furnished to the Requesting Party;
2. The estimated length of time the personnel, equipment, and materials will be available;
3. The areas of experience and abilities of the personnel and the capability of the equipment to be furnished;
4. The name of the person or persons to be designated as supervisory personnel; and
5. The estimated time when the assistance provided will arrive at the location designated by the Authorized Representative of the Requesting Party.

E. SUPERVISION AND CONTROL: The personnel, equipment, and resources of any Assisting Party shall remain under operational control of the Requesting Party for the area in which they are serving. Direct supervision and control of said personnel, equipment, and resources shall remain with the designated supervisory personnel of the Assisting Party. Representatives of the Requesting Party shall provide work tasks to the supervisory personnel of the Assisting Party.

The designated supervisory personnel of the Assisting Party shall have the responsibility and authority for assigning work and establishing work schedules for the personnel of the Assisting Party, based on task or mission assignments provided by the Requesting Party and SCEMD. The designated supervisory personnel of the Assisting Party shall:

1. Maintain daily personnel time records, material records, and a log of equipment hours;
2. Be responsible for the operation and maintenance of the equipment and other resources furnished by the Assisting Party; and
3. Report work progress to the Requesting Party.

The Assisting Party's personnel and other resources shall remain subject to recall by the Assisting Party at any time, subject to reasonable notice to the Requesting Party and SCEMD. At least twenty-four (24) hour advance notification of intent to withdraw personnel or resources shall be provided to the Requesting Party, unless such notice is not practicable, in which case such notice as is reasonable shall be provided.

F. FOOD, HOUSING, AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY: Unless specifically instructed otherwise, the Requesting Party shall have the responsibility of providing food and housing for the personnel of the Assisting Party from the time of their arrival at the designated location until the time of their departure. However, Assisting Party personnel and equipment should be, to the greatest extent possible, self-sufficient for operations in areas stricken by emergencies or disasters. The Requesting Party may specify only self-sufficient personnel and resources in its request for assistance.

G. COMMUNICATIONS: Unless specifically instructed otherwise, the Requesting Party shall have the responsibility for coordinating communications between the personnel of the Assisting Party and the Requesting Party. Assisting Party personnel should be prepared to furnish communications equipment sufficient to maintain communications among their respective operating units.

H. RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES: Whenever the employees of the Assisting Party are rendering aid pursuant to this Agreement, such employees shall have the powers, duties, rights, privileges, and immunities, and shall receive the compensation accruing to their employment.

I. WRITTEN ACKNOWLEDGMENT: The Assisting Party shall complete a written acknowledgment regarding the assistance to be rendered, setting forth the information transmitted in the request, and shall transmit it by the quickest practical means to the Requesting Party or SCEMD, as applicable, for approval. The form to serve as this written acknowledgment is attached as Exhibit C. The Requesting Party/Division shall respond to the written acknowledgment by executing and returning a copy to the Assisting Party by the quickest practical means. The Requesting Party/Division shall retain a copy of this acknowledgement for its own records.

SECTION 3. REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

A. PROCEDURES FOR REIMBURSEMENT: Unless the Assisting Party states otherwise in writing, the ultimate responsibility for the reimbursement of costs incurred under this Agreement shall rest with the Requesting Party, subject to the following conditions and exceptions:

1. An Assisting Party shall bill the Requesting Party as soon as practicable, but not later than forty-five (45) calendar days after the Period of Assistance has closed. Upon the request of any of the concerned Participating Governments, the time frame may be extended as agreed upon by the two parties.
2. If the Requesting Party protests any bill or item on a bill from an Assisting Party, it shall do so in writing as soon as practicable, but in no event later than forty - five (45) calendar days after the bill is received. Failure to protest any bill or billed item in writing within forty-five (45) calendar days shall constitute agreement to the bill and the items on the bill and waiver of the right to contest the bill.

B. COSTS ELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT: The costs incurred by the Assisting Party under this Agreement shall be reimbursed as requested to make the Assisting Party whole to the fullest extent practicable.

1. The Assisting Party shall only be reimbursed for those expenses incurred in the performance of such work specified in a written request as approved by the Requesting Party.

2. Expenses incurred in support of work not specified in an approved written request shall be the sole responsibility of the Assisting Party.

3. Travel-related expenses (meals, lodging, and transportation) shall be reimbursed in accordance with the terms of the Assisting Party's pay and travel policies.

4. The Requesting Party shall reimburse the Assisting Party for employment costs of personnel who render assistance under this Agreement to Requesting Party including wages, salaries, and all other compensation for mobilization, hours worked, and demobilization. Such compensation shall include all contributions for insurance and retirement, and such employees shall continue to accumulate seniority at the usual rate. Employees of the Assisting Party shall retain all the duties, responsibilities, immunities, rights, interests, and privileges incident to their usual employment while providing assistance to the Requesting Party.

5. The costs associated with the equipment supplied by the Assisting Party shall be reimbursed at the rental rate established for like equipment by the regulations of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or at any other rental rate agreed to by the Requesting Party. The Assisting Party shall pay for fuels, other consumable supplies, and repairs to its equipment as needed to keep the equipment in a state of operational readiness. Rent for the equipment shall be deemed to include the cost of fuel and other consumable supplies, maintenance, service, repairs, and ordinary wear and tear. With the consent of the Assisting Party, the Requesting Party may provide fuels, consumable supplies, maintenance, and repair

services for such equipment at the site. In that event, the Requesting Party may deduct the actual costs of such fuels, consumable supplies, maintenance, and services from the total costs otherwise payable to the Assisting Party. If the equipment is damaged while in use under this Agreement and the Assisting Party receives payment for such damage under any contract of insurance, the Requesting Party may deduct such payment from any item or items billed by the Assisting Party for any of the costs for such damage that may otherwise be payable.

6. The Requesting Party shall pay the total costs for the use and consumption of all consumable supplies delivered by the Assisting Party for the Requesting Party under this Agreement. In the case of perishable supplies, consumption shall be deemed to include normal deterioration, spoilage, and damage notwithstanding the exercise of reasonable care in its storage and use. Supplies remaining unused shall be returned to the Assisting Party in usable condition upon the close of the Period of Assistance, and the Requesting Party may deduct the cost of such returned supplies from the total costs billed by the Assisting Party for such supplies. If the Assisting Party agrees, the Requesting Party may also replace all used consumable supplies with like supplies in usable condition and of like grade, quality and quantity within the time allowed for reimbursement under this Agreement.

7. The Assisting Party shall keep records to document all assistance rendered under this Agreement. Such records shall comply with State audit requirements as specified in applicable State regulations. Upon reasonable notice, the Assisting Party shall make its records available to the Requesting Party for inspection or duplication between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on all weekdays, except for official holidays.

SECTION 4. INSURANCE

Each Participating Government shall bear the risk of its own actions, as it does with its day-to-day operations, and determine for itself what kinds of insurance, and in what amounts, it should carry. If a Participating Government is insured, its file shall contain a letter from its insurance carrier

authorizing it to provide and receive assistance under this Agreement and indicating that there will be no lapse in its insurance coverage, either on employees, vehicles, or liability. If a Participating Government is self-insured, its file shall contain a copy of a resolution authorizing its self-insurance program. Each Assisting Party shall be solely responsible for determining that its insurance is current and adequate prior to providing assistance under this Agreement. The amount of reimbursement from the Requesting Party shall be reduced by the amount of any insurance proceeds to which the Assisting Party is entitled as a result of losses experienced in rendering assistance pursuant to this Agreement.

SECTION 5. LIABILITY

To the extent permitted by law, and without waiving sovereign immunity, each Party to this Agreement shall be responsible for any and all claims, demands, suits, actions, damages, and causes of action related to or arising out of or in any way connected with its own actions, and the actions of its personnel, in providing mutual aid assistance rendered or performed pursuant to the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

SECTION 6. TERM

This Agreement shall be in effect for one (1) year from the date hereof and is renewed automatically in successive one (1) year terms unless terminated upon sixty (60) days advance written notice by the Participating Government. Notice of such termination shall be made in writing and shall be served personally or by registered mail upon the Director, South Carolina Emergency Management Division, Office of the Adjutant General, West Columbia, South Carolina, which shall provide copies to all other Participating Governments. Notice of termination shall not relieve the withdrawing Participating Government from obligations incurred hereunder prior to the effective date of the withdrawal and shall not be effective until sixty (60) days after notice thereof has been sent by the Director, South Carolina Emergency Management Division, Office of the Adjutant General, to all other Participating Governments. It is the responsibility of the signatory to update the signatures as required.

SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS AGREEMENT

This Agreement shall be in full force and effect upon approval by the Participating Government and upon proper execution thereof.

SECTION 8. ROLE OF SOUTH CAROLINA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIVISION

SCEMD shall serve as the central repository for executed Agreements, maintain a current listing of Participating Governments with their Authorized Representative and contact information, and provide a listing of the Participating Governments online at the SCEMD website.

SECTION 9. SEVERABILITY: EFFECT ON OTHER AGREEMENTS

Should any portion, section, or subsection of this Agreement be held to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, that fact shall not affect or invalidate any other portion, section or subsection; and the remaining portions of this Agreement shall remain in full force and effect without regard to the section, portion, or subsection or power invalidated.

In the event that any parties to this Agreement have entered into other mutual aid agreements or inter-local agreements, those parties agree that said agreements are superseded by this Agreement only for emergency management assistance and activities performed in major disasters pursuant to this Agreement. In the event that two or more parties to this Agreement have not entered into another mutual aid agreement, and the parties wish to engage in mutual aid, then the terms and conditions of this Agreement shall apply unless otherwise agreed between those parties.

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