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## **Quick Reference to the National VOAD Disaster Spiritual Care Guidelines**

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## INTRODUCTION TO QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

### KEY CONCEPTS:

- This Quick Reference Guide includes a summary of the six sections of the National VOAD Disaster Spiritual Care Guidelines (Sections One through Five plus the Appendices as listed in the Table of Contents).
- The Quick Reference Guide directs readers to the larger DSC Guidelines document via line numbers found in parenthesis and, for electronic versions, via hyperlink.
- The National VOAD Disaster Spiritual Care Guidelines are intended for those within National VOAD organizations with advanced experience in disaster spiritual care who will be planning and implementing their agency's disaster spiritual care training, programing and operations.
- Specific sections of the DSC Guidelines document may be inserted into existing emergency management plans as an annex or appendix.
- National VOAD Committees produce three kinds of documents, each with distinct vetting processes.
  - RESOURCES are tools, manuals, and written materials developed through a National VOAD committee process to assist organizations in their disaster response activities. For example, the National VOAD Emotional and Spiritual Care Committee produced Light Our Way in 2006.
  - POINTS OF CONSENSUS (POC) are minimal standards, ethical principles or operational principles specific to a relevant topic of the Committee. National VOAD member organizations are required to agree to abide by approved Points of Consensus. The National VOAD Disaster Spiritual Care POC were ratified in 2009.
  - GUIDELINES typically relate closely to an approved POC document and represent expanded operational, behavioral and/or ethical recommendations from the Committee.
- The Glossary provides clarification on key terms and acronyms.
  - DSC: Disaster Spiritual Care
  - DSCP: Disaster Spiritual Care Provider: also known as spiritual care provider
  - "Deployed DSCPs" and "Local faith providers" :The DSC guidelines distinguish between "deployed" and "local" disaster spiritual care providers.
  - "Shared settings" and "Private settings". The DSC Guidelines are primarily designed to address DSC in "shared settings."

## SECTION ONE: Background, Purpose and Scope

**SECTION SUMMARY:** The National VOAD Disaster Spiritual Care Guidelines are intended "to assist communities to implement high quality disaster spiritual care services to serve the needs of individuals, families and communities affected by disaster." They guidelines share the hallmarks of excellence to which National VOAD members aspire in disaster spiritual care, promoting confidence among our partners and the general public providing orientation, experience in cultural and religious diversity, mutual accountability, parameters of mutual protection and safety, and shared language and terminology.

## **KEY CONCEPTS:**

- National VOAD member organizations and other adjudicating bodies rightly exercise self-defined standards of accreditation and certification.
- In some shared settings – specific methods of disaster spiritual care provision may be selected by those designated with primary responsibility for these settings.
- These guidelines are primarily designed for shared settings.

## **SECTION HIGHLIGHTS:**

### **Importance of Training and Credentialing, Scope of Services Provided, and Covenant for National VOAD Partners**

It is imperative that disaster spiritual care providers are appropriately trained and publically identified and credentialed (Sec. 4) for their work to competently help vulnerable persons and assure the public that this work is being done by qualified persons. The need for DSC training and credentialing is apparent when looking at several interrelated dynamics and concepts:

1. Disasters are demanding events that create significant distress and can even overwhelm coping abilities.
2. Disaster spiritual care is delivered within the context of this organized cycle of activities, particularly in the response phase.
3. Disaster spiritual care is part of the broader crisis intervention process. This process is not psychotherapy, but is an acute short-term helping process
4. Disaster spiritual care includes training, assessment, deployment, programs and curricula, guidance in commemorative observances, and resources to assist local disaster planners
5. Disaster spiritual care relates to the National VOAD “4 C’s.”
6. National VOAD members share in all services, including disaster spiritual care, seeking to include all partners in bringing valued contributions to serve the needs of affected communities.

## **SECTION TWO: Striving for Excellence – Disaster Spiritual Care**

**SECTION SUMMARY:** Section Two outlines the rights that people impacted by disasters have related to what they can expect from National VOAD organizations and their disaster spiritual care providers. This section also refers specifically to DSC POC’s #9 (regarding imbalance of power) #4 (regarding partnering with mental health professionals), and #10.

National VOAD recognizes that people impacted by disasters are vulnerable in times of crisis. National VOAD organizations and their disaster spiritual care providers have a duty to protect those impacted by disaster while providing appropriate care. The following guidelines are provided to highlight the disaster spiritual care (DSC) that people impacted by disasters will receive.

## **SECTION THREE: Striving for Excellence as an Organization**

**SECTION SUMMARY:** This section provides suggested guidelines to assist organizations as they help DSC providers maintain a healthy balance before, during and after deployment.

## **SECTION HIGHLIGHTS:**

1. Deployed DSC providers will be clearly identified within their organization. Essential support and management systems should be in place to facilitate effective DSC within the disaster operation. Affiliated DSC providers will not self-deploy to a disaster scene, but will only provide care when authorized through a coordinated organizational response that works within the incident management system of the sponsoring organization.
2. Disaster Spiritual Care Providers Have a Right to Expect that National VOAD Organizations Will Provide:
  - a. Training and preparation
  - b. Pre-deployment assessment and screening
  - c. Appropriate deployment placement
  - d. Appropriate recognition of role and function
  - e. On site supervision and peer support
  - f. Care for the caregiver on scene
  - g. Post-deployment care
  - h. Organizational leadership care
3. The Quick Reference Checklist form will help disaster leadership ensure that the disaster operations provide essential components to support effective DSC teams.

## **SECTION FOUR: Disaster Spiritual Care Providers in Shared Settings**

**SECTION SUMMARY:** This section includes specific discussion of training, experience, credentialing, competencies, qualifications, identification, typing and accountability structures for the delivery of appropriate and effective DSC. Local disaster spiritual care providers and communities of faith are the primary resources in post disaster spiritual care.

### **KEY CONCEPTS:**

- National VOAD recommends that individual National VOAD member organizations credential their own deployed disaster spiritual care personnel and volunteers in compliance with identity, vetting, qualifications and affiliation outlined in this section.
- National VOAD does not endorse one member agency's training over another's. National VOAD member organizations will be responsible for preparing their affiliated DSC providers with knowledge, skills, abilities, and how to utilize life experience and select training programs to achieve those ends.
- "Resource typing" describes the level of the DSC provider's capability using job titles and standards for qualifying for various roles and job titles. NIMS recommends that NGOs credential personnel and volunteers not covered by NIMS Job Titles based upon identity and affiliation with the NGO. Table 4-10 summarizes suggested type titles with recommended affiliation, accountability, endorsement, education, training, experience, physical/medical fitness and certification.
- Credentialing includes identification, competency, and accountability.

### **SECTION HIGHLIGHTS**

Section 4 includes tables for Local DSCPs in shared settings, Deployed DSCPs (Deployed by National VOAD member organizations) and National VOAD Member DSC trainers.

Components included in the table below:

1. Identification
  - a. Table 4.1 For Local DSC Providers in Shared Settings, "Identification" encompasses documentation that authenticates identity of the DSC provider and confirmed relatedness to faith communities from the local disaster-affected area.

- b. Table 4.1 For National VOAD Member Organization Deployed DSC Providers in Shared Settings “Identification” encompasses documentation that authenticates identity of the DSC provider by photo, expiration date, full name, signature, etc., after organizations have certified the identity and qualification of the DSC providers.
2. Competency categories (Section 4.B, Table 4.3)
- a. Competency in disaster spiritual care is defined as proficiency in three key areas needed to be effective in this specialized ministry. These factors relate to several core issues in the delivery of DSC:
- I. Personal attributes (Who I am) TABLE 4.4, 4.5, 4.6
  - II. Knowledge (What I know) TABLE 4.4, 4.5, 4.6
  - III. Skills (What I do) TABLE 4.4, 4.5, 4.6
- b. Table 4.3 outlines three competency factors, the key issue, definition of the factor, primary method of development and documentation.
3. Accountability: In order to care properly for vulnerable persons, protect the integrity of the organizations represented and facilitate successful services, local and deployed DSC providers working in shared settings agree to the following accountability guidelines. (Table 4.7)
- a. Accountability detail table for Local DSCPs in shared settings: TABLE 4.7
  - b. Accountability detail table for National VOAD Member Organization Deployed DSCPs in shared settings: TABLE 4.8
4. Development and documentation of competencies
- a. Table 4.9 outlines recommendations on life experience and education/training that help develop the competencies, in addition to methods for documentation.
5. Resource typing table includes specific discussion of credentialing, competencies, qualifications, identification, typing and accountability for use by National VOAD member organizations.

	LOCAL DSCPs IN SHARED SETTINGS	DEPLOYED DSCPs (DEPLOYED BY NATIONAL VOAD MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS)	NATIONAL VOAD MEMBER DSC TRAINERS
<b>A. IDENTIFICATION</b>	TABLE 4.1	TABLE 4.2	TABLE 4.2
<b>B. COMPETENCY CATEGORIES</b>	TABLE 4.3	TABLE 4.3	TABLE 4.3
<b>C. COMPETENCY DETAIL</b> Attributes, Knowledge, Skills	TABLE 4.4	TABLE 4.5	TABLE 4.5, 4.6
<b>D. ACCOUNTABILITY</b>	TABLE 4.7	TABLE 4.8	TABLE 4.8
<b>E. DEVELOPMENT and DOCUMENTATION of COMPETENCIES</b>	TABLE 4.9	TABLE 4.9	TABLE 4.9
<b>F. RESOURCE TYPING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education and training</li> <li>• Experience</li> <li>• Physical and mental fitness</li> <li>• Certification/licensure</li> </ul>	N/A	TABLE 4.10	TABLE 4.10

## SECTION FIVE: Intentional Integration of Disaster Spiritual Care Within Recovery and Response

**SECTION SUMMARY:** The purpose of this section is to provide a template for deploying and working with disaster response personnel from faith-based, governmental and private sector organizations that are coordinating *intentional* disaster spiritual care activities in shared settings.

### **KEY CONCEPTS:**

- Local community resources:
  - Local spiritual care providers and communities of faith are primary resources for post-disaster spiritual care. DSCPs entering from outside of the community support but do not substitute for local efforts.
  - Local resources may not be prepared or may become overwhelmed and need additional support.
  - Whenever possible, DSC providers entering from outside of the local community should coordinate with and refer to local spiritual care providers.
  - National VOAD member agencies support and do not usurp or interfere with existing relationships between other National VOAD members and their affiliated local spiritual care providers or communities of faith.
  - National VOAD affirms the importance of various organizations to manage who provides services within their own operations/span of control
  - Each state VOAD is encouraged to have a standing Emotional and Spiritual Care committee (ESCC) who will provide a key role in cooperation, communication, coordination, and collaboration during disaster spiritual care.

### **SECTION HIGHLIGHTS:**

#### **ORGANIZATION, ASSESSMENT, COORDINATION, and DELIVERY of DISASTER SPIRITUAL CARE (DSC) in SHARED SETTINGS**

1. Organization:
  - a. DSC is most effective when each municipality, county and state formally designates where DSC fits within written incident management plans
  - b. DSC is most effective when organized into a comprehensive disaster response and recovery effort by the collaboration of the following DSC organizational team that includes 1.) a designated, experienced disaster spiritual care faith community representative to advise incident command on assets, needs and DSC providers in the affected community (Appendix B), 2.) leadership of existing ministerial/interfaith association(s) and other local faith leadership within the affected community, and 3.) appointed leadership of the established local or state VOAD Emotional and Spiritual Care Committee or equivalent (ideally comprised of representatives from multiple faith-based member organizations) with support of affiliated National VOAD member organizations as needed.
  - c. DSC is most effective when a mechanism is built to develop local disaster spiritual care capacity (e.g. identify, train and incorporate local faith providers).
    - i. A Local Faith Provider is typically a clergy person or other recognized faith group leader in the local community where the disaster has occurred - the formal religious leadership within some religions. (Appendix D: "Glossary and Acronyms")
    - ii. Spiritual Care Providers also known as DSC providers are individuals who provide emotional and spiritual care and support from a faith-based perspective to affected populations and responders. Disaster spiritual care providers come from diverse cultural and spiritual backgrounds to provide sensitive, appropriate care for all persons and to acknowledge and respect every spiritual perspective.
    - iii. National VOAD Guidelines Section 4, "Disaster Spiritual Care Providers in Shared Settings," includes specific discussion of training, experience, credentialing, competencies, qualifications, identification, typing and accountability structures for the delivery of appropriate and effective DSC.

- iv. National VOAD member organizations are encouraged to be prepared to provide a list of their qualified, deployable DSC providers available to a particular community.
2. Assessment
    - a. The DSC organizational team listed above and in paragraph 5.c.ii of the Guidelines of the larger document above completes community assessment of need for DSC. Appendix E contains additional information for conducting a community spiritual care assets and needs assessment.
    - b. Prepared municipalities, counties and states are aware of the DSC capacity within their jurisdictions.
    - c. National VOAD affiliates of local DSC providers may support DSC community assessment.
  3. Coordination
    - a. The DSC organizational team listed above coordinates DSC in collaboration with liaisons appointed by responding groups providing DSC.
    - b. Local community faith leaders are included in all phases of a disaster from preparation to recovery.
    - c. Inclusion of additional stakeholders (e.g. those listed in paragraph c.ii of this section) enhances coordination and delivery of DSC.
  4. Delivery
    - a. Each municipality, county, and state looks first to local capacity to meet the DSC need within an impacted area.
    - b. When local resources are exceeded and assistance from outside of the community is required, spiritual care services entering from outside of the community support but do not substitute for local efforts.
    - c. DSC resources entering from outside of the community extend mutual respect and observe the “4 Cs” of National VOAD.
    - d. The State VOAD ESCC is a helpful source of referrals for competent, trained and experienced DSC providers from municipal, county, state and national levels.

## APPENDICIES:

**SUMMARY:** Appendices A, B and C contain basic information intended for their named audiences. Appendix D (Glossary and Acronyms) and Appendix E (Community Spiritual Assessment) are helpful for all audiences.

**APPENDIX A:** Suggestions for Local Communities of Faith. Offers guidance for “How Your Community of Faith Can Prepare to Provide Disaster Spiritual Care Following Disasters.”

**APPENDIX B:** Job Aid for the Faith Community Representative. The Faith Community Representative (FCR) serves as a faith community liaison in order to advise Emergency Management and Incident Command on assets and needs of the faith community in the affected region. Appendix B Describes the Section, Mission and Duties of the FCR during Preparedness, Response and Recovery phases.

**APPENDIX C:** Fact Sheet for Emergency Management - Disaster Spiritual Care. Provides an overview of key concepts and roles related to disaster spiritual care including:

1. Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster
2. The Faith Community Representative
3. National VOAD Disaster Spiritual Care “Points of Consensus”
4. National VOAD Disaster Spiritual Care Guidelines
5. The Role of Local Faith Communities and Disaster Spiritual Care Providers
6. Coordinating Disaster Spiritual Care
7. Access and Credentialing

**APPENDIX D:** Glossary and Acronyms

**APPENDIX E:** Community Spiritual Assessment. Includes questions related to the whole community and the local faith community that will help guide the assessment of spiritual care assets and needs.

**APPENDIX F:** Resources includes links to key National VOAD resources including:

1. Full text of the National VOAD Disaster Spiritual Care Points of Consensus (p. 54)
2. Talking points regarding the National VOAD Disaster Spiritual Care Points of Consensus (p. 56)