FACT SHEET:
Florida Disaster Case Management Planning

The purpose of this Fact Sheet is to describe the concept of operations developed in the Florida Disaster Case Management Planning to date and facilitate discussion regarding future planning efforts.

Basic Principles

The Florida Disaster Case Management Basic Plan was developed as a collaborative process by the Florida Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD), the Florida Division of Emergency Management, Volunteer Florida and Long-Term Recovery Groups. The Plan is written to enable stakeholder organizations to meet the highest standards of service and has been based upon case studies, lessons learned and National VOAD guidance. As part of this planning process, the Florida VOAD Disaster Case Management Committee has further identified five basic principles to guide the State's Disaster Case Management Operations. To be most effective Disaster Case Management should be:

- Coordinated and Collaborative,
- Scalable,
- Standardized,
- Sensitive to functional and access needs, and
- Outcome-focused.

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities are identified for each stakeholder group. Some of the critical responsibilities include:

- Florida VOAD will coordinate guidance to COADs, VOADs, state and local government on program improvement planning and implementation of Disaster Case Management;
- Volunteer Florida will serve as the fiscal administrator for federal Disaster Case Management funds should they become available;
- Florida Division of Emergency Management will submit the statement of intent to apply for the federal Disaster Case Management grant in the request for declaration;
- The Coordinating Case Management Organization (from the voluntary sector) will coordinate Disaster Case Management services wherein more than one organization is providing Disaster Case Management in a disaster-affected community or region.
- Long-Term Recovery Groups will manage the community needs assessment process to identify capacity and gaps for community recovery with support from FEMA and other organizations.

Additional responsibilities will be delineated in the Casework and federal DCMP Grant Annexes as appropriate.

Standardized Elements

The Florida VOAD Disaster Case Management Committee identified several elements of Disaster Case Management that require standardization to ensure consistent service to disaster survivors. These elements include: training, confidentiality, personnel qualifications, prioritization & complexity of Cases, technology platform, forms/ Release of Information, Case transition and Case closure, non-compliance, how to estimate staffing needs, and conference call frequency. Standard Operating Procedures will be developed to guide Case Managers through these processes.

Other Important Plan Details

In order to facilitate effective Disaster Case Management services, the Planning Committee evaluated options and made determinations regarding the best practices to follow in Florida. Included below are some of the highlights developed in this planning process:

- Assumptions
  - o Florida has a robust network of disaster relief organizations to provide casework services; eliminating the need for Phase I of the federal Disaster Case Management Program with the exception of catastrophic disasters. (page 4)

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- Case Management Process
  - Client eligibility will be based on the criteria set by Disaster Case Management Provider Organizations and Long-Term Recovery Groups in non-declared disasters or the requirements set by the federal Disaster Case Management Program grant when FEMA funded. Ineligible Clients will be referred for advocacy or other services. (page 14)
  - All Clients should be encouraged to take ownership for their own recovery and to participate fully in taking steps on their own behalf. (page 18)

- Program Management
  - Organizations should thoroughly assess their internal capacity to implement a Disaster Case Management program and consider the implications of such a program prior to involvement. (page 21)
  - Florida's Long-Term Recovery Groups are particularly proactive; therefore case management programs must be available to provide support early on. (page 23)
  - All staff, paid or volunteer, should meet the same personnel standards. (page 24)
  - The recommended ratio of Disaster Case Managers to Supervisors is 5 to 1; however this ratio should never exceed 15 to 1. (page 25)
  - A caseload of 20-35 Clients per Disaster Case Manager is a generally accepted guide. (page 25)

- Collaboration
  - Case Managers should be engaged with the community-based Long-Term Recovery Group in order to effectively access resources for their Clients. (page 30)
  - Efforts should be made to overcome the challenges of sharing appropriate information with government partners. (page 30)
  - Best practices suggest that government-provided Disaster Case Management is not preferred. (page 31)
  - The Florida recommended case management tool is the Coordinated Assistance Network (CAN). Alternate systems may be used; however, they must meet minimum requirements. (page 32)

- Outreach
  - Outreach should be coordinated and utilize as many different methods as possible. If activated, the Community Coordinator will ensure consistent messaging across outreach groups. (page 33)

- Training
  - Florida VOAD recommends all Disaster Case Managers and Supervisors complete the United Methodist's Committee on Relief's (UMCOR) Basic Disaster Case Management training. (page 37)

Future Planning

The Florida VOAD Disaster Case Management Planning Committee is currently working on the development of several supplements to this Plan, including:

- Casework Integration Annex
- Federal DCMP Grant Annex
- Local Implementation Guide
- Florida Disaster Case Management Forms
- Standard Operating Procedures
  - Confidentiality Protection
  - Case Transition
  - Case Closure

The development of these documents will require recommendations and input from the Disaster Case Management Committee and members of the Florida VOAD at large.