

# Volunteer Now: How to Volunteer

*Quick overview of the volunteer registration and deployment process.*

Neighbor helping neighbor is a deeply rewarding experience and our country is fortunate to have so many individuals who will put aside their daily lives to assist others in need. Volunteers must be willing to work with survivors of all races, genders, orientations, religious affiliations, or nationality/legal status.

## 1 - Overview of the Volunteer Manager

The Volunteer Manager is intended as a way for the general public to support the work of voluntary agencies active in disaster. It allows you to:

1. **Register to volunteer** and be placed in a pool of volunteers which can be accessed by participating agencies who are looking for volunteers.
2. **Sign Up for Volunteer Opportunities** for users not wanting to register yet want to help their community; registered users may also sign up for any open Volunteer Opportunity.

### About Your Privacy

When you register, your information is made available to a trusted network of nonprofit agencies who are active in disaster. These are some of the most trusted brand names in the country. You control your data and may choose to opt out at any time.

Registered use may also up their profile to manage when and where they are available and may accept or decline any opportunity offered to you.

## 2 - Registering as a Volunteer

### About the Volunteer Registration Form

The Volunteer Registration form is organized into 4 tabs (steps) to simplify registration. Required Fields appear with an asterisk (\*) and a message notifies users to complete the field if it is blank before the record may be saved.

Some fields in the form will need specific input such as an email address which must be valid. Users are prompted with a short message in red directly under the field which needs attention before the registration can be submitted.

## Completing the Registration Form

**Step 1: About Volunteering** introduces the process of volunteering and gathers information about what type of work you want to do and where (or for what disaster) you would like to volunteer.

- Start with what type of work you would like to do. Click on the arrow at the end of the box and an option list will appear.
- Select what type(s) of work you want to volunteer to do. You may select more than one option. When you click on the option, it will automatically be listed in the field. If you'd like to remove an option that you clicked, you can click on the "x" and it will be deleted.
- Continue to answer the questions for which event you are responding to, when you are available, and also provide any additional information or special concerns that a volunteer coordinator or supervisor should be aware of before contacting you as a potential volunteer.
- When you have completed all of the required fields in Step 1, click on the box at the bottom of the page to "Move to Step 2".

**Step 2: Personal Information** provides your contact information, an emergency contact phone, your address, as well as information as to whether you are registering as an individual or as part of a group to an agency looking for volunteers.

**TIP:** Volunteer Opportunities are a quick way to help sooner as there is no registration required. However, agencies may request you complete a registration to track your activities.

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**Step 3: Skills** is where you will provide information about the skills and experience you can offer agencies working in a disaster-impacted community.

**TIP:** Only select skills which you feel comfortable with and are physically able to complete for long hours.

**Step 4: Terms of Use** asks you to agree to the terms of use, add today's date and set up a password.


First, view the Terms of Use Agreement, and click on “I Agree to the Terms of Use Agreement”. Agreeing to the Terms of Use Agreement is required to go to the next step.

Next, complete the following to provide the information needed to set up your Volunteer Profile. You'll need to create a password and select and answer a security question. Select the box “I'm not a robot.”

**NOTE:** Some users may also be asked to select photos which contain similar objects as part of the CPACHA.

After you press the Submit button, new users will need to verify the email address used in the registration process.

Also, you will be given a chance to complete a background check. A link will be provided to the organization Verified Volunteers to have your background check completed. There is a cost of \$10. If you are not ready to have a background check conducted, you will have the option to do so by logging back into your account and visiting the "Background Check" tab at another time.



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### Getting Started

Thank you for your interest in volunteering to help in hurricane relief efforts.

Some National VOAD members require volunteers to undergo a background check. Be sure to check with the organization's requirements for volunteering. If they require a background check, Sterling Volunteers is able to conduct a background check for a small fee. The process for ordering your background check is simple and takes less than 5 minutes. Here is a quick review:

- Review and electronically sign our consent form
- Confirm your information and make payment (\$10.00)
- The background check search will take 24 hours on average. Once the background check has been completed you will be notified via e-mail with further instructions. At that time you are able to log-in, view the results and share with organizations as needed.

## Register and Start Your Order

Please create an account by filling in the fields below.

Already have an account? [Click here to login](#)

[Username & Password Requirements](#)

Set up security questions now

By checking this box, I accept and agree to comply with the [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Use](#) posted on the Site.

**TIP:** Completing a background check helps agencies put you to work sooner—especially if the volunteer opportunities are working directly with individuals in the community or a disaster shelter.

After completing the registration, please log back in to review your account.

### 3 - Managing Your Availability

Once the registration has been completed and you have logged back in, you will have access to a link called “My Profile.” The profile page will give you access to update your information.

**TIP:** You have the ability to be removed from being deployed by setting your “Availability Status” to “Unavailable”. Once you are ready to volunteer, you can change your status to “Available” to be considered for deployment.

### 4 - Signing Up for a Volunteer Opportunity

#### Searching for Volunteer Opportunities

From the Volunteer Now landing page, select “Volunteer Opportunities” to search and find the right opportunity for you.

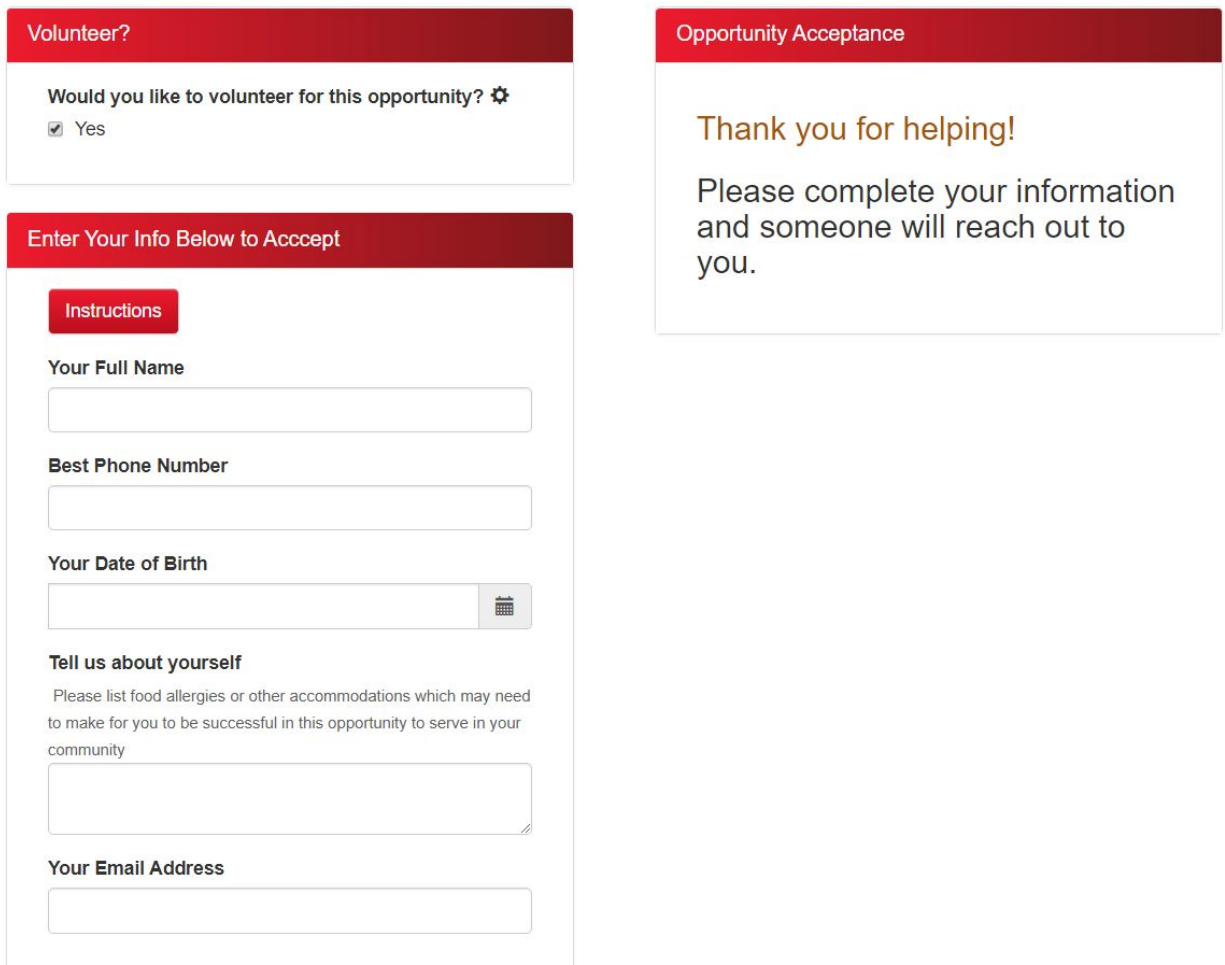
Volunteer Opportunity Type	Volunteer Opportunity Status	Volunteer Opportunity Start Date	Volunteer Opportunity End Date	Volunteer Number of Volunteers Needed
Technology Support	Active	2019-02-11	2019-02-25	5
Local Liaison	Active	2019-04-04	2019-12-31	1
Debris removal	Active	2019-01-28	2019-02-28	100
Feeding	Active	2019-02-18	2019-02-28	5
Sandbagging	Active	2019-02-21	2019-02-28	5
Shelter Team	Active	2019-04-09	2019-04-18	45
Technology Support	Active	2019-04-05	2019-08-30	2
Sandbagging	Active	2019-03-21	2019-03-21	1
Muck and Gut	Active	2019-04-19	2019-04-19	22
Sandbagging	Active	2019-04-11	2019-04-11	22

You will be directed to a list of available Volunteer Opportunities. They are listed by

Volunteer Opportunity Type, Status, Start Date, End Date, and number of volunteers needed. You can refine your search results by typing a key word or phrase into the “Filter” box to narrow your search. Columns may be sorted to organize results by selecting the column header such as start date.

## Accessing a Volunteer Opportunity

Click on the volunteer opportunity on the search results in which you are most interested. This takes you to the “View and Accept Opportunity” page.



The screenshot displays two side-by-side panels. The left panel, titled "Volunteer?", contains a question "Would you like to volunteer for this opportunity?" with a gear icon and a checked "Yes" option. Below this is a section titled "Enter Your Info Below to Accept" with a red "Instructions" button. It includes input fields for "Your Full Name", "Best Phone Number", and "Your Date of Birth" (with a calendar icon). A text area for "Tell us about yourself" is accompanied by a note: "Please list food allergies or other accommodations which may need to make for you to be successful in this opportunity to serve in your community". At the bottom is an input field for "Your Email Address". The right panel, titled "Opportunity Acceptance", features a "Thank you for helping!" message in orange and a request to "Please complete your information and someone will reach out to you."

After reviewing the opportunity, you can choose to accept the opportunity by clicking the box next to “Yes” under “Volunteer”.

The opportunity details are removed and you will be asked to provide your contact information. Once complete, you will receive a thank you message.

## 5 - About the Deployment Process

### About Volunteering in a Disaster Environment

Volunteering to help after a disaster is difficult work and can often be very stressful—but without volunteers, recovery is not possible.

Neighbor helping neighbor is a deeply rewarding experience and our country is blessed with many individuals who will put aside their daily lives to assist others in need.

Volunteers must be willing to work with survivors of all races, genders, orientations, religious affiliations, or nationality/legal status.

### When You Are Contacted by an Agency

You will be contacted by email or phone to begin the deployment process.

Volunteers are typically provided food and water while working; but it is always recommended to bring some food/water which can be stored in a car or a safe place.

Volunteers are not reimbursed for travel, gas or lodging. However, some agencies may provide group transportation and/or offer lodging in a staff shelter if multi-day opportunities are required.

**NOTE:** If recruited by a disaster agency, go into your Profile to set your deployment status to "Deployed" to let coordinators know that you have been deployed.