

Bay Area Disaster Animal Response Team (DART)

We are pleased that you are interested in learning more about our team and hope that after reading this information, you will continue with the steps necessary to be able to help animals in need in your community (and beyond) in case of a disaster and become active with our team.

Each year, in January, any necessary revisions will be made to this manual. You will be asked to reread and sign that you agree to abide by these rules and forward that statement to the Bay Area DART volunteer coordinator. A copy of the current handbook will also be on the www.bavareadart.org website for your reference.

This will need to be received by January 31, 2011. See last page for sending info.

History of DART

In 1996, after HSUS DART training, Donna Bainter and Connie Brooks from SPCA Pinellas County started the Bay Area DART team and Beth Lockwood assisted with the development of the Horse council disaster program.

Connie worked with VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) to develop the Bay Area DART team with emergency management in 1997 and Rick & Mary Chaboudy from HS of Pinellas joined in. Emergency management worked with the team to promote public education on disaster preparedness and resources for the team.

In 1999 the Bay Area DART team assisted with the Florida wildfires and Connie Brooks approached Kenny Mitchell (operations director for Pinellas County Animal Services) to see if our team could come under EFS (Emergency Service Function 17). At that time, Bay Area DART joined Florida's ESF-17

In 2003 the Bay Area DART team was requested by HSUS (Humane Society of the United States) to deploy to several hurricanes in North Carolina, North Florida and the Southeastern US.

In 2004, Connie was asked to coordinate the team for response for the hurricane season. Our team worked closely with Pinellas County Animal Services and Humane Society of the US (HSUS) and the Department of Agriculture.

In 2005 - Hurricane Katrina hit and the rest is history. Bay Area DART was called upon by HSUS – SE Region director Laura Bevan to set up the receiving animals from the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina at Hattiesburg, MS. Our team assisted with the temporary sheltering of over 7,000 animals in a 6 week period of time.

Bay Area DART Mission Statement

Bay Area DART's mission is to promote the safety and well-being of all animals adversely affected during a disaster, and to respond to the needs of those who provide emergency and supportive care to animals during all phases of a disaster.

WHAT WE DO AND HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Our team has been growing steadily since its inception, thanks to the dedication of our leaders and team members.

We focus on community awareness, disaster preparedness for families and their pets, cohesiveness thru regular meetings and multiple training opportunities throughout the year.

We assist local shelters when they bring animals back from hoarding, neglect or puppy mill situations and need extra hands on help until the animals can get integrated into their systems by setting up a temporary shelter for them (usually at the receiving shelter).

We educate the public about disaster awareness and preparedness by setting up booths and tables at community events and offer a speaker's bureau for civic groups and companies.

When asked to deploy, we do so under either Pinellas County Animal Services or HSUS. We mainly assist when deployed at the temporary pet shelter caring for the animals that are temporarily housed there.

We have three types of volunteer categories and there is state team (FLSARC) and an additional national team opportunity:

1. **Auxiliary members** – these people are notified by email of meetings and training opportunities. No formal training is needed, but volunteering at an animal shelter is very helpful and encouraged (and rewarding). The aux members are not able to “deploy” but are able to assist when the shelter needs extra help setting up temporary cages, cleaning, feeding, and doling out TLC to those animals coming in from the hoarding, neglect or puppy mills. If necessary, the team aids with kennel set up, cleaning, breakdown and animal registration, during shelter hours at any of the three Pet Friendly Shelters that Pinellas County currently has available during an evacuation.

2. **Team members** – these people have gone thru the 20+ hour DART training as set forth by HSUS OR the Awareness Level Animal Sheltering course thru Florida State Animal Response Coalition (FLSARC) and are working toward the other requirements that are needed to “deploy” in Pinellas County. They also help with all of the above opportunities that are listed under the auxiliary member category.

a. Completion of the DART training OR the FLSARC awareness level emergency animal sheltering course (there is a fee for these classes)

b. Completion of the DART volunteer application

c. Completion of FEMA ICS 100 course (taken online and at no charge)

d. Completion of FEMA ICS 200 course (taken online and at no charge)

e. Completion of FEMA ICS 700 course (taken online and at no charge)

f. 30+ hours of shelter volunteer hands on experience (animal shelter of your choice) Must be 10+ hours working with felines and 10+ hours working with canines

g. Photo of yourself

3. **Deployment members** – these team members have completed ALL of the above requirements and are able to deploy in Pinellas County, should our team be called upon to do so.

4. **FLSARC** – The State of Florida now has a team and team members deploy under the State Agricultural Response Team (SART), should assistance be needed. The State has the same guidelines as #3 above, but requires the FLSARC course not the DART course, to be able to deploy. A separate application and proof of training requirements is required thru FLSARC to be deployed under SART outside of Pinellas County, but within the State of Florida. Web link: www.flsarc.org

5. **N-DART members** – HSUS has a national DART team and they have their own requirements to be accepted into the national team. You would be asked to deploy directly from HSUS and that deployment could be anywhere in the US or internationally. Web link: www.ndart.org

Who's Who and Who Does What

Connie Brooks - Sumter DART– Director of Operations, Bay Area DART lead chairperson and President of Florida State Animal Response Coalition (FLSARC)

Greg Andrews - Pinellas County Animal Services, Operations Manager and Bay Area DART chairperson

Dr. Dewayne Taylor - Pinellas County Animal Services - Director and ESF17 for Pinellas County and also is the staff veterinarian and in charge of coordination and staffing of the Pet Friendly Shelters

Suzi Dill – maintains and updates Bay Area DART website www.bayareadart.org

Suzi also maintains the inventory for the mobile DART supplies trailer

Stacie Caronna- Special Events Coordinator - staciedart@gmail.com

- Accepts requests for events and speaking engagements and schedules volunteers for those events
- Maintains DART printed inventory and Bay Area

Pam Burns - Volunteer and Communications Coordinator pamburnsdart@gmail.com

- Schedules volunteers for deployments and when shelters request assistance
- Maintains team members' Bay Area DART files and paperwork
- Communicates thru email for team and auxiliary member updates and training opportunities
- Handles orders for scrubs and DART shirts

BAY AREA DART VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

The information in this handbook is subject to change and is to be used only as a reference guide and is not all inclusive. After reading the handbook, please sign (can be electronic signature) and email back to pamburnsdart@gmail.com I must have this signature prior to you volunteering as a Bay Area DART member. Effective January 1, 2011.

Explanation of Bay Area DART Volunteer Handbook

This handbook has been produced to educate you about our team and prepare you for our volunteer activities. This handbook will share with you a little of our history, philosophy, practices, and policies.

We hope that this handbook will give you a look into Bay Area DART and what we have to offer you, the volunteer. This is just a brief overview of Bay Area DART.

The goal of this handbook is to allow you to feel comfortable with our team. We depend on you (so do the animals) – *your success is our success*. Please don't hesitate to ask questions. Your volunteer coordinator will gladly answer them. Once you start, we truly believe that you will enjoy your volunteer work as well as meeting your fellow volunteers with whom you share similar interests. We also believe you will find Bay Area DART to be a fulfilling organization to volunteer with. We ask that you read this Handbook carefully, and refer to it whenever questions arise.

As always, if you enjoy your experience with us, please refer others to our team. Through growth, we can make even greater successes in animal welfare and education.

Thanks for taking the time and making a commitment to help the animals in your community ...and beyond.

Volunteer Expectations

Commitment

Volunteers are expected to be committed to Bay Area DART's mission and philosophies and while attending events to conduct themselves appropriately. If you have questions regarding our programs or activities, please ask before participating. Volunteers are not required to attend every, activity or event, but if you agree to participate in an activity or event, you are expected to adhere to that commitment.

We encourage you to attend as many regular meetings throughout the year as possible (we usually don't hold meetings in November or December).

We try to incorporate a short training session with each meeting so that everyone can walk away with a little more knowledge. The meetings are also a fantastic way to get to know your fellow team members. It is always much easier to work alongside someone that you know or have seen before.

If you choose to do so, you may cease volunteering with Bay Area DART upon the completion of any volunteer assignment, or when you are not currently engaged in an assignment. You may stay subscribed to the e-mail lists as long as you wish, regardless of your volunteering status with us. If you should decide to not volunteer with us any longer, we would appreciate it if you would please send the Volunteer Coordinator an e-mail to let us know that you will no longer be volunteering with us. We ask that you notify the Volunteer Coordinator so that other arrangements may be made in a timely manner, prior to our next event.

Treatment of Animals

Animals are to be treated kindly, gently, with respect and professionally, at all times.

Confidentiality

All volunteers are expected to maintain confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer. This includes information that may involve other volunteers, clients, sponsors and/or the overall activities of Bay Area DART.

Conduct

As a volunteer, you are a representative of Bay Area DART. When involved participating in events or when wearing your volunteer attire, you are expected to present a good image of the organization at all times. This includes language. Please be respectful of your fellow volunteers. If you disagree with someone, another volunteer, potential adopter, sponsor or event attendee, please refer the matter to the DART event coordinator. It is unacceptable to act unprofessionally at any time while at a DART sponsored event or function. Volunteers agree to allow pictures and/or video to be taken and used, without compensation, for the purpose of promotion and publicity related to Bay Area DART and/or its programs.

Bay Area DART is an at-will agency and has the right to terminate a volunteer with or without cause. Breach of listed code of conduct terms may result in the loss of ability to volunteer for Bay Area DART. Bay Area DART reserves the right to release any volunteer who is in conflict with the goals of Bay Area DART.

Visitors

DART volunteers may not bring any visitors, friends or family with them when they are scheduled to work a shift. Visitors are only permitted in the public areas of the shelter, during open hours.

No visitors are permitted in the building after hours.

Volunteers' animals are not permitted at the meetings or while you are on deployment.

Volunteer Attire

Volunteers must dress appropriately throughout event participation. We require that you be easily identified by the public as a Bay Area DART volunteer. Event volunteers must wear a Bay Area DART shirt and/or name badge identifying them as a volunteer. Shirts are available for purchase periodically for pre-order or as inventory is available. Attire requirements will be posted with each event's information. If your attire is inappropriate for a task, you will be reassigned to a safer position or asked to leave. This is for your safety as well as your co-worker's safety.

Media Procedures

So that efforts are not duplicated and information is accurate, it is essential that any dealings with the media must be brought to the attention of the Special Events Coordinator or a DART chairperson. They are the only people that should speak with the media. Media includes anything printed, broadcast, or televised about Bay Area DART. We welcome any contacts or story ideas you may have and ask that you direct them to the Special Events coordinator or a chairperson.

Harassment

Bay Area DART maintains a policy forbidding harassment of volunteers whether by supervisory volunteers, fellow volunteers, or other individuals that a volunteer may come into contact with as part of their assigned task or event. Harassment is deemed to have occurred when the conduct interferes with the volunteer's performance at the assigned task or event or creates a hostile environment for the volunteer. Bay Area DART requests that any volunteer who may experience such harassment to promptly notify the Volunteer Coordinator, Special Events/Fundraising Coordinator or a Bay Area DART chairperson, in order that an investigation can take place and appropriate action taken.

Drugs and Alcohol

Drugs and alcohol are not to be used by volunteers during activities and events. (Exceptions for alcohol consumption are given for special designated functions or events for those persons legally of age.)

Theft

Theft of any Bay Area DART rescue equipment, office supplies and/or other Bay Area DART materials is cause for immediate dismissal from the volunteer program. Depending on the severity of the theft, legal action may also occur.

Suggestions

As you go about your volunteer activities, you may notice ways to improve the quality or efficiency of your volunteer service. We ask that you share these ideas with the Volunteer Coordinator through daily conversation, in meetings, or through a note via email to explain your ideas. After considering your suggestion, the Volunteer Coordinator will let you know whether or not your suggestion will be implemented and, if so, what action will be taken. Be on the lookout for improvements. Your ideas can make a difference in the level of our success and the quality of our volunteer program.

Volunteer Etiquette for Special Events

1. If you sign up for an event, please check your e-mails frequently in case details change. If you are one who does not check e-mail often, please let the coordinator know and leave a phone number that is best to reach you at. The **“DART Event Info Log”** will be e-mailed out 3-7 days before an event. Again, check your e-mails to keep up to date with changes. Send back a confirmation e-mail stating that you still plan to attend the event as scheduled in the event log.
2. When signing up for an event, please provide a cell phone number that you carry with you. In case details change and you need to be reached quickly, the coordinator will have your number to call you. If an emergency comes up, and you are unable to attend an event, contact the special events coordinator (phone number will be provided on event info log). This way the special events coordinator can make appropriate arrangements, in your absence.

Being a no-show, no-call is not appreciated. It makes everyone on the team look irresponsible and unprofessional when you do not show up as scheduled.

1. Some events will be all day, and can be split into shifts. Other events will be shorter and may not have that option. When signing up, let the special events coordinator know your availability. The special events coordinator will also request a volunteer to pick up and/or drop off the material at Fletcher’s Harley Davidson. 17129 US Highway 19 N, Clearwater - (727) 535-1844. Please call Laura BEFORE picking up the materials.
 3. If you are not able to do this, let the special events coordinator know when signing up for an event. Please show up **on time** for a scheduled event; and call if you will be more than a few minutes late.
 4. The special events coordinator will try to make sure you have appropriate directions to your venue. However, a certain amount of responsibility will be on your part to find out where you will be going and how long it will take to get there. Look up directions when you sign up for an event, and let the coordinator know if you have any questions so we can try to help clear up any confusion with ample time.

5. **ATTIRE** - DART members can wear their blue DART t-shirt, DART polo, or DART scrubs. Auxiliary members can wear a dark blue polo shirt. Some events are outdoors, in which you can wear shorts; khaki in color. Again, please make sure they are professional looking; nothing too short or inappropriate. If you will be wearing pants, please be sure that they do not have holes, are not dirty, and look professional and appropriate. Name tags will be provided and must be worn during the event.
6. Help each other out! If you don't know how to answer a particular question, don't make something up! Feel free to say 'I don't know the answer to your question, but let me ask ____ to see if he/she can answer that for you'. If ____ doesn't know the answer, get the person's information and the coordinator can contact them after an event.
7. The DART event material will be stored at **Fletchers Harley Davidson** located at 17129 US Highway 19 N; Clearwater, FL 33764-7503; (727) 535-1844. The event coordinator will coordinate a time for you to pick up the material. It will need to be during the business hours and availability of Fletchers. If something gets broken or lost, or if we are running low on supplies, please let coordinator know. Be sure to return all equipment and supplies back to their original location.
8. A typical event will consist of taking:
 - One rolling bin with printed brochures/materials, donation jar, and banner.
 - One presentation board
 - Some outdoor events may require bringing our tent, table, and chairs. The special events coordinator will let you know ahead of time if those items will be needed.
9. **Safety first!** If the event is scheduled outdoors, please be sure to wear sunscreen, good shoes, a hat, and bring water. Most places will have beverages available for purchase, but just in case, **be prepared** and bring your own water. Also, be sure to take frequent breaks and encourage others that may be standing for a while, to go sit and relax for a few minutes. Stand in the shade as much as possible. If you need to sit, please do not sit in front of the display and table; take a seat behind the set up and let the other volunteers know you need a break.
10. Check the weather reports before you leave for your event. If at an outdoor event the weather turns bad, please seek shelter indoors taking the DART material with you. If there is no place indoors, find the event coordinator and see if there are alternate plans in case of inclement weather. **No event is worth your safety.** Seek the nearest shelter, try to take the DART material with you and keep safe in until the bad weather passes.
11. Please maintain a professional attitude and respect other members and the general public. We have a very diverse team with many talents, and we can utilize these experiences at an event.

Typical Conversation at a table/booth event

When a person approaches our table, a good conversation starter is: **“Do you have any pets at home?”**

If the answer is **‘Yes’**, you would follow up by asking **‘How many pets and what type of pets?’**

- ✓ We give them **one disaster passport per pet**, explaining certain areas on the paperwork; such as attaching a current photo of their pets, or a picture of them with their pets. Phone numbers of vets, relatives, vaccine history, etc. Discuss the best ways to transport the different types of animals they may have. Explain that it is best to fill out the information on the forms now, and store in a location that can

be found easily in case they need to evacuate quickly. A zip lock bag works well for to store the Disaster Passport.

Next question we ask: **Do you have an evacuation plan for your pets?**

- ✓ Pass out 'Pet Disaster Plan' brochure
- ✓ Pass out Small animal Evacuation sheet-going over how much food to bring, explain how they need a large crate for each pet to stay in for long periods of time, etc.
- ✓ Pass out and discuss Hurricane Guide; Ask people if they know their evacuation zone, and if not, help them locate it.
- ✓ Talk about the three pet friendly shelters in the area and the type of accommodations they should expect if having to go there. Explain that if possible, finding a host home may be a better option. Explain that they need to register for a PFS ahead of time.

Tell them about DART.

You can use the presentation board pictures to illustrate the many disasters DART has assisted with. Some things you may say are: "Bay Area DART is a team of trained volunteers focused on all aspects of dealing with animals in disaster situations. Some of these disasters include natural disasters like hurricanes, floods, fires, as well as manmade disasters like puppy mills, hoarders, and search and rescue. Bay Area DART's mission is to promote the safety and well-being of all animals adversely affected during a disaster, and to respond to the needs of those who provide emergency and supportive care to animals during all phases of a disaster."

- ✓ Pass out DART info brochure
- ✓ Pass out DART volunteer sheet and tell them about the website if interested in more information. (They can also sign up online)

Fundraising for Bay Area DART

You may encourage donations for Bay Area DART at any time. Donation jars may be made available to you as requested. Any monies collected must be turned into the Special Events coordinator, volunteer coordinator or a DART chairperson immediately following any event. Any direct or indirect solicitation of commercial businesses must be done through prior approval. You may feel free to present your lead at any time, but all correspondence needs to be handled through a DART chairperson to keep things in order and eliminate any miscommunication.

Deployment Rules

The following immunizations are highly recommended. Priority for deployment will be given to those volunteers that have received these vaccinations.

1. Hepatitis A
2. Hepatitis B
3. Tetanus – mandatory within the past 5 years
4. Pre-Exposure Rabies

- Volunteers shall report to and remain in contact with the appropriate ICS authority or your team coordinator/leader and confine their activities to the stated mission and directives of the Incident Action Plan. You will be required to sign in and sign out each day.
- Bay Area DART volunteers must not self-deploy. Authorization by the Animal Response Team Leader or Coordinator is required before arriving on scene. DO NOT show up unannounced. DO NOT bring friends, pets, children or anyone not directly asked to deploy.
- Volunteers shall identify any assignments that are beyond their capabilities and notify their supervising authority of this limitation, immediately. Don't be afraid to say that you are not comfortable with a particular task there will be another important job for you to be able to do.

- While representing Bay Area DART, volunteers will not advocate or otherwise promote positions – political, religious, organizational, financial, or ideological – that are not in conformity with the official position of Bay Area DART. If you are unsure – ask your supervisor.
- While on-site for a disaster response, all Bay Area DART volunteers must display their current identification, DART t-shirt or DART scrubs and name tag. There may be times that a lead organization will require you to wear a shirt identifying you with their organization. You are to abide by their request to do so, if asked.
- While participating in any Bay Area DART related activities, volunteers shall project a professional manner and appearance. In particular, the following will not be tolerated:
 - Violation of any laws
 - Consumption of alcoholic beverages while wearing your Bay Area DART shirt or scrubs
 - Possession, use, or selling of any illegal drugs
 - Illegal use or display of a firearm
 - Inappropriate smoking or smoking in areas not designated as smoking area
 - Public outbursts or derogatory remarks about other organizations or volunteers are forbidden
 - Willful failure to follow directions
 - Interference with the work of others
 - Theft
- Volunteers must dress appropriately throughout participation. Attire requirements will be posted with each event’s information. If your attire is inappropriate for a task, you will be reassigned to a safer position or asked to leave. This is for your safety as well as your co-worker’s safety.
- Volunteers shall observe all safety rules and regulations and shall follow instructions for proper use, care and safety of equipment.
- Bay Area DART members must not use or authorize the use of the name, emblem, endorsement, services, or property of Bay Area DART, except in conformance with Bay Area DART policy. Information that is available solely as a result of the volunteer's affiliation with Bay Area DART is confidential and can be disclosed or used only with the expressed authorization of Bay Area DART chairperson or coordinator.
- Volunteers must in no way influence the conduct of Bay Area DART so as to confer financial benefit on any person, corporation, or entity in which the individual has a significant interest or affiliation. Volunteers shall not accept or seek on behalf of anyone else, any financial advantage or gain, other than the nominal value of affiliation with Bay Area DART.
- Volunteers who suspect a conflict of interest (e.g., between a Bay Area DART assignment and their own personal, professional, or financial interest) shall disclose such potential conflict to the Bay Area DART point of contact upon becoming aware of it. The individual must absent him or herself during deliberations and refrain from participating in any decisions or voting in connection with the matter.
- Volunteers shall not accept personal gratuities. All offers of donations shall be directed to a Bay Area DART chairperson or special events/fundraising coordinator or placed in the appropriate donation jar and turned into either the special event coordinator, volunteer coordinator or a DART chairperson at the end of the event.
- Volunteers shall not enter private property to perform Bay Area DART duties without verbal permission from the owner and a supervising authority or without a law-enforcement escort.
- Volunteers will be required to document or participate in documentation for each rescue in a timely manner, and submit documentation to a supervising authority and/or Bay Area DART volunteer coordinator.
- Volunteers shall transport animals only to facilities that have been designated by the supervising authority and as directed following animal transport protocol and standards.
- Volunteers shall refrain from taking photographs of people without their written permission. No photos of animals are permitted without the express permission of a team leader while on deployment. Any photos that are taken shall not be used for public display without written permission of the owner.

When Working Directly with Animals

ATTIRE: Volunteers must dress appropriately throughout participation. We require that you be easily identified by the public as a Bay Area DART volunteer. Event volunteers must wear a Bay Area DART shirt and/or name badge identifying them as a volunteer. Shirts are available for purchase periodically for pre-order or as inventory is available. Attire requirements will be posted with each event's information. If your attire is inappropriate for a task, you will be reassigned to a safer position or asked to leave. This is for your safety as well as your co-worker's safety. Closed toed shoes and long pants are mandatory.

When Asked to Deploy

Take care of personal/home matters **FIRST**, including care for dependents and necessary supplies for the duration of activation.

If you are not in robust health, do not attempt front line duty. There are many other areas that are just as important (sometimes even more important) that you will be able to do. Specifics of your health status do not necessarily need to be disclosed, but it is your own responsibility to be sure that your work assignment is appropriate to your own health status. As an incident wears on, medical problems that are not usually limiting may become significant; if you begin to have difficulty, please notify the incident commander, first-aid doctor or your immediate supervisor promptly so that you can be reassigned or excused.

Bring at least a 3-day supply of food, drinking water, clothes, medication, bedding (sleeping bag, pad, and pillow), toiletries, rain gear, and other day-to-day necessities. You may not be able to return home or leave the facility to purchase necessary items. You will be provided with a list of suggested supplies prior to deployment. You should have a general idea of what you should have in your "to go" bag and I suggest that you start assembling those items as you see them on sale throughout the year. Remember to update your "pack" every 3 months and verify the expiration dates and replace those items when expired. Additional supplies and equipment will be provided or required depending on the type of disaster. Follow specific instructions as provided by the Volunteer Coordinator.

During a deployment **IS NOT** the time to test new equipment, wear new shoes, etc. Practice using your gear ahead of time so that you are familiar working with your gear.

Do not wear shorts, open-toed shoes, or orange outer garments in the shelter or in the field.

Take with you copies of all of your training certificates as they may be required to show when you sign in. DART OR FLSARC course completion certificate, animal related training certifications, ICS 100, 200 and 700 certificates of completion, a list of vaccinations and dates received, any special training that relates to the type of disaster responding to (hazmat, search & rescue, etc).

Report to the assigned location (e.g., command post, information center, or staging area) at the designated time.

Report to the immediate supervisor. Remember to follow ICS (incident Command System) chain of command.

The command structure is to be respected and neither usurped nor ignored at any time. The incident commander currently on duty is the ultimate decision-maker for all situations within the animal response program on-site.

You will be required to sign in and sign out **EACH** day.

Obtain a situation briefing and assignment.

Acquire necessary approvals (e.g., for field deployment), materials, necessary forms, supplies, safety gear and procedure protocol.

If you have been given supplies or equipment that you are unfamiliar with how to use them ASK for instructions on proper use and care!

Stick with your assignment until you are reassigned or replaced. Any job left unattended can interrupt the integrity of shelter operations as a whole.

If you must leave your position before completing the current assignment, you must make your immediate supervisor aware so that someone else can be assigned to complete that task.

Do not talk to reporters or other members of the news media yourself. Instead, direct press to the Public Information Officer (PIO). Only the PIO speaks to the media. If you are not sure who the PIO is, refer inquiries to your supervisor.

Maintain personal log of activities and hours worked, using appropriate administrative forms.

Understand that there is no monetary compensation provided for your volunteer services. Keep all expense receipts, relating to the deployment and check with a tax advisor to see if some of the expenses may be deducted from your income tax return.

Insurance

You are expected carry your own medical insurance and vehicle insurance for personally owned equipment used during a disaster.

Safety

Be careful! Good faith and due diligence are required.

Volunteers cannot be spared liability for their own reckless or willful misconduct.

Be safe! Above all, avoid putting yourself or others in danger.

Safety is the responsibility of all response personnel to apply and to monitor. Field work should not be undertaken unless **all** the following conditions are met:

- A supervisor is aware of your present location and activities.
- Response activities being undertaken are those assigned.
- You are qualified and competent to undertake response duties and associated activities (e.g., operate a boat, pump, vehicle, generator, etc.)
- Conditions are safe, and your activities do not put yourself and others at risk.
- One or more team members or volunteers are present to provide assistance, if you are injured or in trouble. In other words, you should never work alone.
- Two is the minimum number of people to be present whenever contact with an animal is possible or when out in the field.
- No team member is to go off on their own
- No team member is to respond to a water rescue without coordination with Command and if you are not qualified to do so. This requires advanced training and should not be attempted, if not qualified.
- Fatigue clouds judgment, shortens tempers and affects your quality of work on subsequent shifts. Be sure to take breaks often and do no overwork yourself.
- Location of first aid supplies is known and readily available.
- Qualified first aid or medical attendant is known and readily available.
- Radio or line communications is fully functional to seek medical or rescue assistance.
- Transportation to a medical station is available.
- Activities under your supervision or by others do not pose a risk to you or your team members.

Cease activities and report immediately to a supervisor if any one of the above conditions is not present.

If you are asked to cease activities by the designated Safety Officer, you must follow those instructions without question.

Injuries - Vaccinations

When in doubt . . . stop and ask. Report all accidents and injuries

Injuries to volunteers are to be reported to a supervisor or Staff Member immediately. Each injury will be dealt with on an individual basis, and appropriate action should be taken.

Please remember that blood on the surface of an animal may not necessarily have originated from that animal; i.e. it may be human blood inadvertently spilled on the animal's coat during a disaster or an attempted rescue. Because of certain blood-borne viruses such as hepatitis and AIDS, your potential exposure to human blood, especially if you have any open sores that contact the blood, is generally a much greater risk than exposure to animal blood. Please use latex or nitrile gloves, CPR masks and take other appropriate measures to protect yourself from exposure to human blood.

Please keep your tetanus vaccination up to date, carry a doctor's certification of your most recent inoculation.

When working in disaster situations, a tetanus booster every 5 years (or whatever your physician recommends) should be maintained. Hepatitis A & B is strongly recommended and may be required, depending on the type of disaster situation.

Rabies is a very serious risk in a disaster situation, especially in endemic areas. Please do not handle wildlife, unless trained to do so.

Take proper precautions to avoid animal bites, and if bitten, please report immediately to your supervisor and/or human medical officer. If the biting animal is not available for either quarantine observation or direct brain examination, you are advised to go through the rabies vaccination and immunoglobulin series (at your own expense).

Debriefing

After every training drill and after every disaster incident response in which you have participated, you will be expected to participate in a debriefing either individually or in a group setting. A "lessons learned", "what worked", "what didn't work" will be discussed as well as improvements needed for future responses.

Stress

Disaster work can be a unique, rewarding, and demanding experience. Under tough conditions people get to know one another quickly. Emergency responders often become like a family, working, eating, in effect, living together. They share a sense of adventure and excitement as well as a purpose. Whatever the stresses of normal everyday life, they become more intense during disasters.

Among the common symptoms of stress are headaches, upset stomach, diarrhea, or poor concentration, feelings of irritability and restlessness. You may become tired of the disaster, of talking or even thinking about it. You may want a break from coworkers and victims or just time to be alone. You may feel frustrated or guilty because you miss your family but are unavailable to them physically or emotionally, due to your focus on the disaster, fatigue, or the like. Phone calls home can be rewarding but also frustrating. You may feel your family and friends simply cannot understand what you're going through. If they become irritated, it can compound the problem, and a sense of isolation and estrangement can follow.

It is the responsibility of every Team member to check workmates for such signs of work-related stress. Report any such signs to a team leader as soon as possible.

The team leader should immediately talk to that volunteer: "What are you feeling?" "What do you need?" The team leader may ask coworkers what they have noticed. Consult other Staff for their opinions: should the volunteer continue in the current assignment, move to another assignment, or leave for the day? Discuss these

options with the volunteer, and make a decision based on what is best for the volunteer. At the outset, it might be best to take at least a 15-minute break from the assignment.

There are many things you can do to manage such stress. When packing for the disaster, take a few mementos from home to make accommodations more personal and comfortable and to help you feel connected. Try to get regular exercise consistent with your physical condition away from the disaster scene. Try to do things that ordinarily help you relax, such as listening to music, running, reading a good book, or taking a hot bath. Get enough sleep, and try to eat regularly even if you're not hungry. Try to avoid foods high in sugar, fats and sodium, such as donuts and fast foods. To be sure your body is getting the nutrients it needs, consider vitamins or mineral supplements. Avoid excessive use of alcohol and coffee. (Caffeine is a stimulant and should also be used in moderation as it affects the nervous system, making you feel edgy.)

Although you need time alone on long disaster operations, you should also spend time with co-workers, particularly if you are a newcomer to disaster work. Arrange respite time, sometimes with co-workers, away from the disaster scene. You will probably find others who enjoy similar activities and who are interested in doing things together (e.g., a movie, dinner, volleyball, a picnic). Humor helps ease the tension, but use it carefully. The nerves of victims and co-workers may be raw. Feelings may be easily hurt, especially if they are the brunt of "disaster humor." So, it is important both to recognize that things, even in an emergency, can be funny but also to express that recognition discreetly, with respect for others who might disagree.

When on the job, it is important to take breaks, especially if you find yourself making mistakes, getting short with people, or unable to concentrate. Stay in touch with family and friends back home. Write or call. Sharing your stories and feelings with them and listening to theirs helps prevent the sense of being a stranger when you return home.

Remember: Volunteers work as a team. Taking care of each other is part of the job.

See next page for agreeing to abide by the conditions set forth in this Bay Area DART volunteer handbook.

**I have read and agree to abide by the Bay Area DART Volunteer Handbook guidelines.
Version #2 – January 2011**

Failure to follow these guidelines may result in my removal from the Bay Area DART team.

Name Printed: _____

Name Signed (electronic signature okay) _____

Date Signed: _____

Email address: _____

Please email this page to pamburnsdart@gmail.com

If you wish to fax this page: Fax 727 596-2555

Or mail to: Pam Burns – 2840 W Bay Dr - #150 – Belleair Bluffs, FL 33770

Thank you again for your dedication to the animals in your community and beyond. . . .