

**MULTIPLE DISTRICT FOUR
CALIFORNIA LIONS CLUBS
INTERNATIONAL**

Disaster Guidebook



SECTION 1 CHAIN OF COMMAND

1.1 Specific immediate duties of the District Governor affected by the disaster:

- a. Call the MD4 Disaster Committee Chairperson
- b. Call the MD4 Council Chair & request disaster funds. The Council Chair will then access the magnitude of the disaster and whether a disbursement from the Disaster Fund is merited. If it is deemed that there is a need, the maximum disbursement will be \$5,000. The Council Chair will then contact the sitting MD – 4 Council of Governors to solicit their approval for disbursement. A two-thirds vote is required for approval.
- c. Call International and request LCIF emergency funds. (1)
- d. Immediately form a Disaster Committee made up of at least four Lions.

1.2 District Disaster Chair Specific immediate duties:

- a. Make one member of the Committee the Treasurer and one the Secretary.
- b. Direct that as soon as money comes in a checking account be opened under the name of "District 4-- Disaster Fund". Checks should require two signatures, one of which is to be the District Governor or Vice Governor.
- c. Immediately contact all Governors or Vice Governors in MD-4 advising them that all future calls and correspondence should come to him. Let them know what, if anything other than money is needed at that particular time and where to send it.

1.3 Disaster Committee

- a. The Disaster Committee should be made up of at least four Lions from one or more clubs near the center of the disaster (unless the disaster is district wide). Each Lion should have the time available and desire to serve plus be fully mobile and totally capable. (2)
- b. The Disaster Committee Treasurer should make immediate deposits of all funds received and immediate payment of all bills as received and approved by the committee. Accurate records must be kept because final reports must be sent to LCI and MD4.
- c. The Disaster Committee Secretary should immediately acknowledge, either by mail or by telephone, anything received from outside the immediate community. Community appreciation can be expressed at local functions at a later date.
- d. All Disaster Committee members should be able and willing to travel throughout the disaster area at any time to assess needs, receive requests for assistance, and direct placement of relief supplies.
- e. The Disaster Committee should meet at least once each week with the Governor or Vice Governor to approve requests, special expenditures, make recommendations and vote on them. The Disaster Chair should inform the District Governor as to all actions taken.

SECTION 2 OTHER AGENCIES (3)

2.1 SALVATION ARMY

The Salvation Army has mobile canteens ready to roll. Usually within 8 hours they can supply water and hot food to disaster victims. In addition they will supply workers.

2.2 RED CROSS

The Red Cross, depending on location, can usually mobilize within 12 hours and has blankets, canned foods and vouchers for housing and clothing. The Red Cross also has medical supplies and can bring in medical teams.

2.3 LIONS CLUBS

Clubs near the epicenter of the disaster can assist all other agencies by securing buildings and/or locations out of which those organizations may operate. A vacant building, a community hall or a Lions clubhouse could be offered to the Red Cross or Salvation Army. Food canteens and temporary shelters should be set up in the most accessible locations of the disaster.

Clubs with clubhouses in other parts of the District could assist by setting up their clubhouses as collection points for specific items needed. (4) They could later make arrangements through the Disaster Chair to have their clubhouse emptied and the goods delivered to the spot designated by the Disaster Chair.

SECTION 3

HANDLING DISASTER PROBLEMS

The Chair, upon appointing the Disaster Committee, should ask that each of them immediately assess manpower needs. The committee members should contact Region and Zone Chairperson to assist in mobilizing the necessary manpower.

The Chair should consult with the Committee to determine the number (if any) and location of Lion clubhouses near the center of the disaster. Specific assignments of committee members should be made to immediately contact those clubs and determine if the facilities can be used under existing conditions.

When a specific, major need is identified the Chair should call the District Governors or Vice Governors and tell them exactly what is needed and where it should be sent.

All Lions receiving donations should keep track of incoming items and report to the Chair what was sent by whom so that the Disaster Committee secretary can acknowledge receipt.

3.1 COLLECTION OF DONATED MONEY & GOODS

All money should be channeled to the Disaster Committee as soon as possible after receipt so that it can be deposited and in place when needed. (5)

Money is, in the long run, the most important donation, as it can be used to purchase the necessities that are not otherwise donated. All Clubs in the Multiple District should be encouraged to have spontaneous fund raisers for the affected disaster District. All funds raised should be forwarded to that District post haste.

All food, medicine and clothing can be delivered to the Lions reception centers within the disaster area or outside. If from outside, the Disaster Chair should be contacted. He should make the arrangements for delivery to the collection center or centers. The Chair will also have the power to reject a donation if it is not required, as will the manager of the reception center. (6)

Food item must be unopened and labeled. All medicine and sanitary supplies must be unopened and labeled. All clothing and bedding should be clean and in good repair. (7)

3.2 DISTRIBUTION OF DONATED MONEY AND GOODS

Keep in mind that LCIF money must be used for emergency medical, food or clothing needs. If your request for money falls within that category and you are still within your first 30 days of the disaster, specify use of that money. However, ALL money requests should be discussed by the Disaster Committee and a vote taken to approve disbursement. If the request is made to buy an appliance or a piece of equipment and the committee approves, one of the committee members should make the purchase and deliver the goods "from the Lions." (8)

Goods of any nature can be distributed from the distribution centers by the volunteer workers usually at the direction of the center's manager. However, food and other items of immediate importance should always be available at the centers for immediate distribution. Volunteers distributing goods should exercise sensitivity toward all the disaster victims and make sure all are given equal and fair treatment. (9)

3.3 LONG-TERM NEEDS IN THE COMMUNITY

Long after the disaster is past there might remain community needs that can be addressed through fund raisers and work projects. Each disaster will leave its own scar and requirements will vary. It will be up to the Clubs in the center of the disaster area to keep the healing process moving

3.4 RECOGNITION FOR LIONS EFFORTS

Two of the busiest Lions during a disaster should be the Club and the District Public Relations Chair. At the Club level pictures should be taken daily and full reports made to the local newspapers, radio and TV stations reporting what Lions are doing for others. The District Public Relations Chair should receive copies of everything from the local Lion Public Relations Chair. The District Public Relations Chair should collect additional information from radio, TV and newspapers and prepare a concise and comprehensive package for LCIF, The Lions Magazine and website.

FOOTNOTES

1. LCIF will normally send you \$5,000.00 which you should receive within 24 hours. REMEMBER these funds are to be used for emergency situations involving food, medical or clothing needs. Any unused funds at the end of 30 days are to be returned to International.
2. The Lions selected should have the time to devote, the funds to carry them through, and have the respect of most of the Lions with whom they might come in contact under these strained conditions. The Disaster Committee members should be able to be on call 24 hours a day.
3. It would be impossible to list all agencies, large and small in California who will join in and assist under disaster conditions. The Salvation Army and Red Cross will always mobilize to work with the Lions no matter where the location, therefore only they are listed.
4. The Clubs can be a real service to the stricken area by contacting the District Chair to determine items that are sorely needed. Clubs should restrict their collections to those items. Some of the most important items that are needed but rarely seen are: flashlights, batteries, candles, lanterns, lantern fuel; generators, bottled water, pet food, shovels, rakes and wheelbarrows.
5. It is heartwarming to say the least to have a visiting Governor appear at a Cabinet meeting with a large check to donate following a disaster. But this money should already be in the affected district's Disaster Fund. It would be better to get the money to the disaster area immediately and visit the Cabinet with a "faux" check. No one will be the wiser except those whom the funds assisted.
6. Remember that it often takes longer to get rid of clothing after a disaster than it does during the disaster. The District Chairperson must be able to say, "We cannot accept more clothing," or whatever the excess item might be. The distribution centers must not get bogged down with excess, unnecessary or unusable items.
7. Food and medicine should be unopened and labeled or should be thrown out. Clothing and bedding should be clean and in good repair or thrown out. The distribution center should be prepared to turn away improper items at the door.

8. It is recommended that Lions buy approved, requested items and deliver them or go with the party making the request and pay for the item. This will assure that the needed items reach their intended destination with a minimum of problems.
9. It is unfortunate that disasters also bring out a few persons who would readily take advantage of free handouts. They may be in the receiving line along with the majority of needy people. You cannot judge or discriminate in these circumstances. All in the food and clothing line must be served.