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Standard Operating Guidelines

1. Organization Operations

Structure

North Valley Animal Disaster Group is a non-profit animal welfare association, organized under IRS code 501(c)3.

NVADG is managed by a Board of Directors. All positions are voluntary. The organization is funded through fundraising, donations and grants. There is no paid staff.

Butte County Disaster Council

NVADG is recognized by the Butte County Disaster Council for the purpose of engaging in disaster service pursuant to the California Emergency Services Act. Volunteers who meet the requirements are registered Disaster Service Workers (DSW).

- Disaster service means all activities authorized by and carried on pursuant to the Calif Emergency Services Act while assisting any unit of the emergency organization during a proclaimed emergency or during a Search and Rescue mission, including approved, documented and supervised:
 - Activities performed to mitigate an imminent threat of extreme peril to life, property and resources, and
 - Training necessary to engage in such activities.
- To qualify as DSW training, an annual schedule of training events must be submitted to the Butte County Office of Emergency Services by January 31 of each year. Additional training can be approved by contacting the BC Office of Emergency Management.

Required volunteer practices / behavior as Disaster Service Workers

NVADG makes every effort to protect our volunteers, the public, and the animals, by strictly following the requirements of the Butte County Disaster Worker registration, and providing required training that will reduce accidents and encourage a safe environment. Volunteers who are not able to adhere to these requirements will be assigned to less hazardous activities and/or non-incident activities. See more under Volunteers in the NVADG Policies.

Volunteers of NVADG are registered Disaster Service Workers, and covered by workers comp insurance during incidents and training if all the following is met:

- Application is completed with name, address and date of enrollment is given.
- A signed statement that the loyalty oath or affirmation was taken or subscribed before an officer authorized to administer oaths. (Butte County OEM).
- All volunteers must pass a minimum background check. Background checks will be provided in coordination with the Butte County Sheriff's Dept and the DOJ.

Note: in the event of an injury, the volunteer and his/her leader will follow the Butte County Disaster Council's DSW Volunteer Injury and Recordkeeping requirements, including written report, reporting the injury to the Butte County Risk Management Injury Hotline at 538-5020, and filing a Field Report of Accident. The volunteer must have signed in on the NVADG attendance roster at the time of the injury.

MOUs

Activation: Operating Guidelines of our MOU with Butte County

NVADG provides Disaster Service Workers trained in emergency animal evacuation and sheltering under an MOU with Butte County Public Health Department (BCPH). NVADG will be activated when a disaster or other emergency creates a need for animal rescue services that is beyond the staffing capacity of the Animal Control Division.

- NVADG will assist Animal Control with all aspects of animal rescue, sheltering and care.
- Butte County does not fund NVADG.
- Our mutual goal is to provide lifesaving services for animals impacted by an emergency or disaster situation. These include wildfire, flood, hazardous materials, animal seizure, neighborhood evacuations or other situations that may leave animals unattended or in need of emergency assistance.
- In the event of wildfire evacuation: BCPH must approve activation and Butte County Fire/CDF Emergency Command must authorize NVADG to assist. Fire can't activate NVADG but Fire must authorize NVADG to go behind fire lines. BCPH approval for activation can come from one of the following
 1. Program Manager – Animal Control
 2. On-Call Animal Control Officer
 3. Assistant Public Health Director
 4. Public Health Director
 5. Program Manager – Emergency Response
- NVADG agrees to do its best to activate upon request and authorization. NVADG volunteers will be scheduled and maintained at a reasonable level according to the needs and duration of the specific incident.

- See Policies for more information.

Guidelines of our MOU with International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW):

- Volunteers who wish to participate in an IFAW response must meet IFAW training, policy and teamwork requirements. Team interviews will be done by NVADG and IFAW.
 - Activations are a minimum of 1 week.
 - Volunteers work at their own risk.
 - Volunteers are under the direction of an IFAW team leader.
 - For more information, talk with NVADG leadership.
- IFAW provides NVADG equipment to use for NVADG and IFAW activations
 - IFAW equipment may be called into action in a disaster in the Western states. NVADG-trained IFAW equipment operators will act to get the equipment to the disaster location.
 - In the event of an IFAW response to a California disaster, NVADG will get direction as to whether NVADG volunteers will be recognized as California DSWs and have workers compensation coverage. It is not automatic.

Guidelines of our MOU with Butte County Search and Rescue:

- For current information, speak with a Technical Rescue Team member.

2. Volunteers

How to become a volunteer: See policies for more information

- In order to manage liability, NVADG must have the following from every volunteer:
 - Application
 - Signed release of liability and NVADG contract
 - Signed Butte County DSW worker form, original must be in file at Butte County Office of Emergency Services. **This is the only way volunteer will be covered for a “workers comp” accident.**
 - Butte County Application and Authorization for background check
 - Volunteers receive a NVADG badge with their picture and Animal Rescue (AR) number.

Volunteers in action: See policies for more information

- **How volunteers are used will be dependent on their training and experience.** See policies.
- **Any person may be expelled as a volunteer for behavior that is dangerous, disruptive or illegal.**

- Volunteers are responsible for maintaining their certifications for driving vehicles and performing functions.
- Volunteers should not expect reimbursement for personal expenses.
- Volunteers interested in working with partner organizations (IFAW, BCSAR) will need to meet the unique requirements of the partner.
- Volunteers must sign in and out on the NVADG attendance roster to be recognized as an active Disaster Service Worker. This applies to training, incidents and many educational outreach events.

Insurance:

- **Workers Comp coverage** is only available when NVADG volunteers are sworn Disaster Service Workers in pre-authorized training or on Butte County Public Health activation. Volunteer must be actively engaged in NVADG work, have signed in on the NVADG attendance roster and completed a 214, if applicable.
- At all other times, volunteers assume their own risk for injury and liability.
- State Good Samaritan laws generally protect volunteers from personal liability when the volunteer is acting in good faith to try to help others, without remuneration.

Expenses: See policy for more information

- **Personal expenses:** Volunteer's personal expenses are not reimbursed. These include Go-Bag items, clothes, comfort items and driving expense. NVADG provides Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs), equipment and supplies to perform evac and shelter duties.
- **Mileage:** With some exceptions for volunteers pulling NVADG or pre-authorized evacuation trailers, mileage is not reimbursed by NVADG.
 - Butte County may reimburse for evacuation mileage providing detailed logging of miles is kept and proper documentation form is completed. See Policies for the current procedure and form.
 - NVADG may reimburse for mileage if Butte County does not. Final determination is made by the NVADG Board and will vary by the incident or training circumstances.
 - **No mileage will be reimbursed without documentation on 214s.**
- **Supplies needed during an incident**
 - Butte County has strict processes for purchasing/procurement. These processes must be followed, or NVADG will have to pay the cost of the purchase or service.
- **Supplies other than during Butte County incident:** NVADG does year-round fundraising to buy supplies for sheltering and evacuation operations. Expenses are approved by the NVADG Board of Directors based on cost and need.

3. General Operations Standard Operating Guidelines

Driving and Towing NVADG Equipment

- Before any volunteer may drive or tow any of NVADG or IFAW equipment, they must meet with a Board Member, or their designee, and show proof that they meet the minimum legal and safe requirements to operate such vehicle/equipment. This can include a driving test.

Purchasing Supplies and Equipment for NVADG Operations

- Purchases are approved by the NVADG Board based on need, cost and funds available.

Attendance tracking for NVADG training, education outreach events and incidents

- Attendees must sign in and out on Attendance rosters. The roster must be given to Butte County Office of Emergency Management.
- Training will be provided and volunteers must meet training requirements as outlined in NVADG Policies.

Hotline/Duty Officer

- The Duty Officers who answer the hotline only have authority to call out volunteers or activate NVADG when instructed by Butte County. See policies regarding Activation.

4. Standard Operating Guidelines During Incidents

Hotline:

Calls to the NVADG Hotline (895-0000) are answered by 5-7 NVADG Duty Officers. In the event of activation, the Duty officer who took the call will arrange for volunteers to be alerted to activate by text, phone call and email. See policies for more information.

Chain of Command:

Emergency Responders, including NVADG, follow the **Incident Command System (ICS)**

- Volunteers are required to complete ICS100 to understand and follow the Incident Command reporting structure.

Pictures (for purposes of this guideline, “pictures” refer to recording of any kind.)

- Never take a picture of anybody or anything that would show anything negative.
- Volunteers are expected to remain respectful of a community’s loss and avoid photos of personal property without consent of the owner.
- Never take any pictures during a criminal case, including but not limited to hoarding or dog fighting.
- When possible have individuals in photographs sign the NVADG Picture Release Form.

- Once approved photos and press releases are released through the appropriate authority, volunteers may post the link or press release directly to their social media site, however, no other comments may be posted.

Wildlife

- We do not accept wildlife into our shelters, nor does NVADG evacuate wildlife

Evacuation Team See policies for more information

- Evacuation is only done during daylight hours and only to reasonably accessible locations. **No "4-wheel drive required" evacuations.**
- Due to the risk, liability and skills required, Evacuation Team volunteers must pass an evaluation. Each year volunteers must attend all required trainings and participate in an evaluation interview with the Evac Team key personnel. See policies for current requirements.

Mutual Aid:

When personnel are required, they shall be requested in the following order:

1. Paid Professionals
2. Active NVADG Volunteers
3. Inactive NVADG Volunteers
4. Department Operating Center
5. Emergency Operating Center
6. Regional Operating Center
7. State Operating Center
8. NARSC request

All requests will be made via proper ICS procedures. NVADG may assist in contacting mutual aid resources whenever requested by the proper authorities.

Purchasing of Supplies and Special Needs Items during an incident. See policies for more information

- All purchases of supplies or special foods must be done through the following process:
 - Butte County Internal Request forms must be completed and submitted
 - The Internal Resource Request form must be submitted to the designated NVADG person who will submit it to BCPHD
 - NVADG will not be reimbursed for items (some exceptions apply) purchased directly by NVADG or its volunteers.
- The NVADG Incident Commander is authorized to spend NVADG money for NVADG purposes, if necessary.