

TX VOAD Membership/Guidelines

Texas VOAD Code of Conduct

1. **The Humanitarian Imperative is the First Priority of Texas VOAD.** I recognize the right and privilege to offer humanitarian assistance, and the same for those who receive such, as a fundamental humanitarian principle which should be enjoyed by all. I will stand by my obligation to provide humanitarian assistance, in organized fashion, wherever it is needed. I recognize and uphold the prime motivation of Texas VOAD response to disaster as to alleviate human suffering among those least able to withstand the stress caused by such disaster. I recognize that when we give humanitarian aid, it is not a partisan, religious, or political act, and should not be viewed or construed as such.
2. **The Highest Degree of Professionalism, Ethics, and Respect is Paramount in Texas VOAD.** I will act in accordance with standards of professional integrity. I will make every effort to avoid conflicts of interest. I will consider the interests of all clients and animals served and do hereby dedicate myself to their best interests and to helping them, recognizing that in some cases their interests may not align to my personal beliefs. I will not intentionally defame, malign, libel, or attempt to demean the character and/or reputation of any person or organization. I will not engage in nor condone harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate behavior in any form. I will endeavor to maintain an environment of respect and cooperation within this organization, its partners, and all other individual and organization associations.
3. **The Aid Given and Aid Priorities Established are Without Discrimination and On a Needs Basis.** I uphold and will act in giving aid regardless of the race, creed, or nationality of the recipients, and without adverse distinction of any kind. I recognize that aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone, and where ever possible, the provision of which is based upon a thorough assessment of the needs of the disaster survivors and the local capacities already in place to meet those needs, and will reflect considerations of proportionality. I recognize that provision of aid will reflect the degree of suffering it seeks to alleviate.
4. **The Accountability of Both Those Assisted and Those Providing Resources Will Be Transparent.** I recognize that Texas VOAD is often in the position of an institutional link in the partnership between those who wish to assist and those who need assistance during disasters. I therefore hold myself accountable to both constituencies as a member of Texas VOAD, and further uphold that all dealings with donors and beneficiaries shall reflect an attitude of openness and transparency. I recognize and support the obligation for my organization to submit situational awareness reports to Texas VOAD during times of disaster.
5. **The Sensitivity, Confidentiality, and Integrity of Information and Activity Within Texas VOAD is Critical.** I, while in the service of and upon separation from Texas VOAD, will legally and ethically maintain confidentiality of information received from clients, co-workers, individuals, and all related organizations. I will honor the trust of the public and my colleagues. I will refer inquiries for public and private information to the Texas VOAD Chairperson. I will attend Texas VOAD meetings regularly and keep informed of Texas VOAD activities, always treating information received from such active participation with discretion and sensitivity, with the intended purposes in mind, and will promptly disclose any issues to this effect to the Texas VOAD Chairperson as soon as possible.
6. **Commitment to TX VOAD.** I will adhere to Texas VOAD Good standing policy to ensure my organization is represented in activities and will engage as appropriate.

As a member of Texas VOAD, I do hereby attest that my organization understands that violation of this Code of Conduct by my organization, affiliates, volunteers, and those responding to disasters on our behalf in the State of Texas may be grounds for dismissal from membership in Texas VOAD, and that I have an obligation to report immediately any suspected violation by others of this Code of Conduct to the Texas VOAD Chairperson.

Texas VOAD Affidavit of Non-Discrimination

It is the policy of Texas Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster to provide services to all persons without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability. No person shall be excluded from participation in or be denied benefits of any service; or be subjected to discrimination because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age or disability. All members also agree to:

- refrain from manipulation, disrespect, or exploitation of those impacted by disaster and trauma,
- respect the freedom from unwanted gifts of religious literature or symbols, evangelistic and sermonizing speech, and/or forced acceptance of specific moral values and traditions.
- respect diversity and differences, including but not limited to culture, gender, age, sexual orientation, spiritual/religious practices, and disability.

As a member of Texas VOAD, I do hereby attest that my organization understands that violation of this Affidavit of Non-Discrimination by my organization, affiliates, volunteers, and those responding to disasters on our behalf in the State of Texas may be grounds for dismissal from membership in Texas VOAD, and that I have an obligation to report immediately any suspected violation by others of this Code of Conduct to the Texas VOAD Chairperson.

National VOAD Points of Consensus Agreement

As a member of Texas VOAD, you affirm the importance of cooperative standards of care and the obligation to follow ethical guidelines. Adherence to common standards and principles promotes the delivery of effective and appropriate disaster support to survivors.

National VOAD has developed Points of Consensus, through committee development and member engagement, which can be viewed at www.nvoad.org.

As a member of Texas VOAD, I do hereby attest that my organization understands that violation of any of the Points of Consensus by my organization, affiliates, volunteers, and those responding to disasters on our behalf in the State of Texas may be grounds for dismissal from membership in Texas VOAD, and that I have an obligation to report immediately any suspected violation by others of any of the Points of Consensus to the Texas VOAD Chairperson.