

DID YOU KNOW?

All Santa Monica College Employees are Disaster Service Workers

You May Be Called Upon to Assist in the Event of Fire, Flood, Earthquake, or Other Natural or Man-Made Disasters

Dear College Community:

The State of California has a Disaster Service Worker Program that includes all public employees. Examples of emergencies include fire, flood, earthquake, public health, or public safety emergencies.

By law (the California Emergency Service Act), all Santa Monica College employees are Disaster Service Workers.

In the event of an emergency, all College employees may be called upon to provide service.

Non-essential College employees (those not required for continuity of operations) may be released from their usual duties so that they can be reassigned to assist *any* agency or organization carrying out its emergency response duties. Employees acting as Disaster Service Workers will be assigned duties within their scope of training, skill, and ability. Examples of Disaster Service Worker responsibilities include:

- Registering people at a shelter or other emergency facility.
- Translating for non-English speaking individuals.
- Acting as a messenger at a designated site.
- Serving food to emergency staff or to vulnerable populations.
- Answering phones.

We cannot determine in advance how many employees will be needed to respond to a particular emergency. In some situations, you might be assigned to do disaster service work closer to your home – for example assisting City workers in the community in which you live. In the event of an emergency, we will let employees know through established communications channels where they should report.

More information can be found on the College's website at: www.smc.edu/emergency

Questions & Answers Regarding the California Disaster Service Worker Program

Who is included?

All public employees are included in the disaster service worker status. This includes any persons employed by any county, city, state agency, school district, or public district.

What are the scopes of duties?

Any public employee performing duties as a disaster service worker shall be considered to be acting within the scope of disaster service duties while assisting any unit of the organization or performing any act contributing to the protection of life or property or mitigating the effects of an emergency.

Who assigns the activities?

Public employees are assigned disaster service activities by their superiors or by law to assist the agency in carrying out its responsibilities during times of disaster.

Do public employees get paid while acting as disaster service workers?

Yes, public employees acting as disaster service workers get paid only if they have taken and subscribed an oath or affirmation as set forth in the California Constitution that declares them to be disaster service workers in time of need. As part of the hiring process at Santa Monica College, all employees take and subscribe to this oath or affirmation.

Can disaster service workers be sued for actions taken while performing duties?

Public employee service workers cannot be held liable for their actions during a disaster while acting within the scope of their responsibilities.

What if public employees are injured while acting as disaster service workers?

Claims sustained by public employees while performing disaster services shall be filed as worker compensation claims under the same authorities and guidelines as all employees within their agency.