

Public School Employees as Disaster Service Workers



By law (the California Emergency Services Act), all San Luis Obispo County Public School Employees are “Local Emergency” Disaster Service Workers.

You may be called upon to assist in the event of fire, flood, earthquake, public health, or other natural or man-made disasters.

In the event of a “Local Emergency” during normal working hours, you will be expected to stay at work and may be asked to perform additional duties, depending on the needs of the community. In the event of a “Local Emergency” during non-working hours, you may be called back to work.



Non-essential 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:

- Safeguarding students at school sites or other designated evacuation centers
- Assisting administration in responding to emergency situations
- 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 may 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 communication channels where they should report.

FAQs Regarding the Disaster Service Worker Program

Who is included?

All public employees are considered Disaster Service Workers. This includes anyone employed by any city agency, county agency, state agency, school district, or public district.

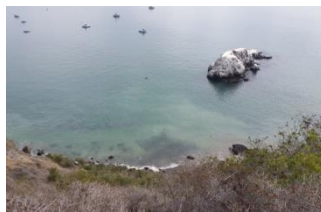


Who assigns the activities?

Public employees are assigned disaster service duties by their supervisors or by law enforcement officers to assist the agency in carrying out its responsibilities during times of disaster.

What does the scope of duty cover?

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.

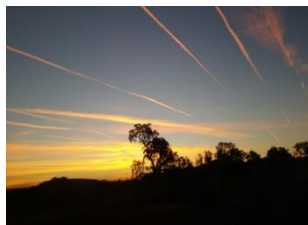


Can Disaster Service Workers be sued for actions taken while performing duties?

No. Public employee service workers cannot be held liable for their actions during a disaster while acting within the scope of their responsibilities.

Do public employees get paid while acting as Disaster Service Workers?

Yes. As part of the public school hiring process in San Luis Obispo County, all employees take and subscribe to an oath or affirmation, per the California Constitution, that declares them to be a Disaster Service Worker in time of need and stating they will get paid for their service.



What if public employees are injured while acting as Disaster Service Workers?

If you sustain an injury while performing disaster services, the incident shall be filed as a worker compensation claim with your employer.

For more information, please go to: <http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/OES.htm>