

Washtenaw County Chapter



Volunteer Opportunities & Chapter Services

Mission of the American Red Cross

The American Red Cross, a humanitarian organization led by volunteers and guided by its Congressional Charter and the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross/Red Crescent/Red Crystal Movement, will provide relief to victims of disaster and help people prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies.

Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross/Red Crescent/Red Crystal Movement

Humanity

The International Red Cross/Red Crescent/Red Crystal Movement (“the Movement”), born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavors, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

Impartiality

The Movement makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavors to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality

In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence

The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary Service

The Movement is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity

There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality

The International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

Overview

Welcome

On behalf of the Washtenaw County American Red Cross (WCARC), welcome, and thank you for joining our team of volunteers. You are now a member of an international movement with organizations in more than 170 countries, all working to fulfill our mission to provide relief to victims of disasters and help people prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies.

Since its inception, the American Red Cross has been a volunteer-led and volunteer-driven organization; the involvement of volunteers at every level is central to our continuing operation. The Red Cross is a place where volunteers and paid staff work side by side and few distinctions are made between these two groups. There are performance expectations for all volunteers, job descriptions for certain opportunities, and in some cases, performance reviews for professional development.

Volunteers are welcomed into the Red Cross and provided with meaningful experiences, appropriate training, and supportive guidance. In return, we have high expectations for volunteers, and ask that volunteers carefully consider accepting responsibilities and do all they can to live up to their commitments.

As a volunteer, you “own your own experience”. You will determine how extensively and in which programs and services you are involved, and you are responsible for making sure the Volunteer Resources Department as well as the program and/or department you work with knows what you need in order to succeed and to enjoy your experience as a volunteer.

At any time, volunteers are welcome to contact their department or program supervisor or the Volunteer Resources Department for additional information, support, or guidance, or to pass along suggestions or comments.

Once again, welcome to the WCARC. We hope your association with our organization is a long and valued one, and we wish you a rewarding experience as an American Red Cross volunteer.

When you volunteer, you “Change a Life, Starting With Your Own.”

All Lines of Service

Challenging positions with flexible hours are available in every department, with every program, and for volunteers with a variety of interests and at most ability levels. Volunteer opportunities are available to all volunteers ages 14 and older, regardless of age, unless otherwise indicated in the position description.

Many volunteer positions require specialized training, which will be provided by the appropriate department or program. Some positions also require prior experience and/or certification.

Listed below are descriptions of the WCARC departments, programs, and services, as well as the volunteer opportunities within those department and programs.

Emergency Services

Disaster Services (DS)

In Washtenaw County, the Red Cross maintains a system of emergency preparedness to deliver assistance 24 hours a day to families and individuals affected by disaster. Our Chapter responds to many types of disasters including floods, tornadoes and fires. Chapter volunteers provide relief for immediate disaster-caused emergency needs such as food, clothing, and shelter. Volunteers who train and respond on the local level may, if they choose, become eligible to respond to large, national disasters as well.

Disaster Action Team (DAT)

- DAT members provide immediate emergency assistance to victims of disasters by offering mass care services, conducting damage assessment, and administering casework services.
- DAT members provide relief to emergency personnel in the form of canteen services.
- Weekday, daytime availability (on-call one week/month; 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.) for daytime team members.
- Weekday evening, overnight, and weekend availability (on-call one week/month; 5:00 p.m. – 8:30 a.m. on the weekdays and 24 hours/day on weekends and holidays) for after hours team members.
- A valid driver's license and reliable personal transportation are required.
- DAT members must live less than a 30 minute drive from the WCARC.
- DAT members must be at least 16 years old; DAT members between the ages of 16 and 18 must volunteer with a parent who is also a DAT member.

Community Disaster Education (CDE)

- CDE volunteers present information about how to prevent and prepare for emergencies to community members and students of all ages throughout Washtenaw County.
- Events take place during the day and in the evening on both weekdays and weekends.

HAM Radio

- HAM radio operators provide emergency communications during disaster relief operations and/or emergencies.
- Weekday evening meetings are held once each month and scheduled opportunities are occasionally available, however this is for the most part a **crisis stand-by position**.
- A HAM radio license, received after attending a HAM radio training, is required, however training can be taken and the license can be received after becoming a volunteer and with direction from the WCARC.

Client Services

- Client Services volunteers follow up with disaster clients (community members who have been affected by disasters) to determine if the clients have additional needs beyond the needs initially covered by Washtenaw County American Red Cross emergency assistance.
- Maintain the Client Assistance System by entering client casework information into the database.
- Weekday, daytime availability is required.

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Service to the Armed Forces (SAF)

The American Red Cross serves military service personnel, veterans, and their families through programs such as Emergency Communications, Military Family Support Group, and volunteer opportunities within the Ann Arbor VA system. Emergency Communications link military authorities, service members, and their families during an emergent time of need. Services are offered 24 hours a day, and in addition to an emergency message system, may include financial assistance, information, and referrals, for families of active-duty service members.

SAF Emergency Communication

- On-call caseworkers provide communications for military authorities, service members, and their families when an emergency arises at home. Caseworkers gather information from family members, hospitals, and medical personnel to document the emergency and convey an accurate message detailing the situation.
- Weekday, daytime caseworker shifts (8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. and/or 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.) and after hours caseworker shifts (5:00 p.m. – 8:30 a.m. on weekdays as well as 24 hours a day on weekends and holidays) are available.
- Training is required and will be provided.
- SAF volunteers must be at least 16 years old.

American Red Cross/Veterans Affairs Partnership

- Volunteers assist with activities and events coordinated by staff members and volunteers at the Ann Arbor VA Hospital.
- Varying hours on weekdays and weekends.

International Social Services (ISS)

In Washtenaw County the American Red Cross collaborates with community partners to educate the public about world health concerns and humanitarian principles through programming such as the Measles Initiative, Tracing and Red Cross Messages, International Humanitarian Law, and Exploring Humanitarian Law.

ISS Volunteer

- Community Outreach – Volunteers teach classes, lead discussions, staff information tables, and distribute information about the Measles/Malaria Initiative and other international outreach programs/projects.
- Training Opportunities – Volunteers take and teach International Humanitarian Law and Restoring Family Links.
- Weekday, daytime availability is preferred but occasional evening and weekend opportunities are available.

Blood Services

The Washtenaw County Chapter is part of the five-county Southeastern Michigan American Red Cross Blood Services Region. To meet the need of the Region's hospitals and clinics, including six in Washtenaw County, the Region must collect an average of 900 pints of blood each day. Blood and blood products are made available to anyone in need, regardless of race, economic status, ability to donate, place of residence, or membership in a specific group.

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Blood Drives

- Volunteers assist with non-medical tasks, including registration and canteen, at the Ann Arbor Blood Donor Center (4624 Packard) and/or at mobile blood drives throughout the county.
- Weekday daytime availability is required.
- *Volunteers do not handle blood or blood products.*

Blood Transportation

- Volunteers drive an American Red Cross vehicle between the Blood Region in Detroit and Washtenaw County hospitals and clinics, delivering life-saving blood to where it is needed most. Drivers typically work one morning each week, but the schedule is flexible.
- Drivers must be able to lift 25 pounds and have satisfactory driving records.
- Weekday morning through early afternoon availability is required.
- *Volunteers do not have direct contact with blood or blood products.*

Health and Safety Services

The WCARC serves as a major health and safety education resource for Washtenaw County community members. Red Cross CPR and First Aid courses teach participants lifesaving techniques and are designed for various skill levels ranging from basic to professional. Water Safety training courses for instructors and lifeguards are also offered. Additional classes cover use of the automated external defibrillator (AED), HIV/AIDS awareness, Basic Aid Training and Whales Tales for elementary school aged children, Babysitting, and Pet First Aid.

Instructor

- Volunteer instructors teach classes in CPR, AED, First Aid, water safety and lifeguarding, babysitting, HIV/AIDS education, and pet first aid during the day and in the evening on both weekdays and weekends.
- Volunteer instructors must complete the basic-level training course (9 hours, \$60) and the instructor training course (26 hours, \$275). After teaching five courses for the WCARC, volunteer instructors will be reimbursed for these expenses.
- Experienced volunteer instructors may qualify to become instructor trainers.
- Instructors must be at least 16 years old.

Customer Service Specialist

- Specialists register students for courses by phone and in person and provide customer assistance to community members interested in purchasing Red Cross products.
- Weekday, daytime availability is required. Volunteers are asked to work three-hour shifts or four-hour shifts at least twice each week.
- Customer Service Specialists must be familiar with computers and have professional communication and basic bookkeeping skills.

First Aid Support Team (FAST)

The First Aid Support Team coordinates with Washtenaw County first responders to provide an immediate response to and care for injuries and/or sudden illness until advanced medical care can be obtained. FAST staffs numerous Washtenaw County events, including but not limited to

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University of Michigan football, basketball, and hockey games; University of Michigan gymnastics meets; and community fairs, festivals, and holiday parades.

FAST Member

- Events take place during the day and in the evening on both weekdays and weekends.
- Team members must be at least 16 years old.
- Team members must be certified in CPR for the Professional Rescuer and Standard First Aid (training is offered through the WCARC).

Financial Development

The Washtenaw County American Red Cross Financial Development Department ensures the availability of funds needed to provide services and also serves as a conduit for donations made by Washtenaw County residents to support national and international disaster relief operations.

Researcher

- Volunteers research the ongoing work of the American Red Cross and utilize the internet, libraries, and community publications to identify possible funding institutions, corporations, and organizations that would be appropriate to provide fiscal assistance to the WCARC.
- Research can be done at any time and in any location, however initial training and occasional meetings at the Chapter (during the day on weekdays) will be required.

Special Events

- Volunteers assist with planning and executing special events (fundraisers, recognitions, meetings, etc.) for all departments of the WCARC.
- Planning for events and the actual events take place during the day and in the evening on both weekdays and weekends.

Data Entry

- Volunteers use the Raiser's Edge data management program to track financial contributions and generate acknowledgement letters.
- Weekday, daytime availability is required.
- Comfort with computers is necessary.
- Experience with Raiser's Edge is preferred, but is not mandatory.

Volunteer Resources

The Volunteer Resources Department serves as a central coordinating point for volunteer recruitment, orientation, processing, referral, placement, follow-up, retention, and recognition for the WCARC. The Volunteer Resources Department is also responsible for intern recruitment, interviewing, processing, and placement.

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General Administrative and Chapter Support

- Volunteers schedule and register prospective volunteers for Volunteer Orientation over the phone, in person, or via email.
- Volunteers follow up with new volunteers after they attend Volunteer Orientation and/or if they decide to leave the organization.
- Volunteers assist with general office tasks such as copying, filing and file creation, faxing, Microsoft Excel spreadsheet design and use, word processing, shredding, mail preparation, etc.
- Weekday, daytime availability is required.

Data Entry

- Volunteers use the Human Resources database system (ATLAS Human Capital Management System – HCMS) to enter volunteer information, enter volunteer hours, and maintain records of volunteer service.
- Weekday, daytime availability is required.
- Training is provided but accuracy, attention to detail, and comfort with computers are necessary.

Outreach

- Volunteers assist with the preparation for and coordination of Volunteer Orientations; experienced volunteers may train to run Volunteer Orientations.
- Volunteers assist with the preparation for and coordination of Volunteer Resources special events such as the Annual Volunteer Recognition, quarterly potluck luncheons and BBQs, and occasional appreciation days throughout the community.
- Varying days and hours, including some evenings and weekends.

Marketing, Public Relations, & Public Affairs

Marketing, Public Relations, and Public Affairs is responsible for increasing awareness about the WCARC in Washtenaw County. This is done through our website; our newsletter, brochures, and flyers; press releases and articles in local newspapers; and community presentations, programs, and outreach.

Website Design/Maintenance

- Develop new content for and update existing content on the WCARC website.
- Update and maintain the WCARC social media presence.

Graphic Design

- Volunteers with experience in design software programs assist with creating brochures, flyers, and event collateral materials.
- Occasional weekday, daytime availability is needed to attend required meetings at the Chapter, but in general graphic design work can be done from home or another location at times convenient for the volunteer.

Marketing & Communications

- Volunteers assist with programs and projects that increase awareness about the Red Cross throughout the community.

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- Photojournalists, feature writers, special event planners, web designers, graphic artists – and more – are needed.
- Weekday, daytime availability is generally needed, but some evening and weekend opportunities are available.

Ambassadors Program

- Volunteers attend local events such as blood drives, festivals, school and civic events, and fairs to share information about the WCARC. Volunteers pick up the display board and information to be distributed from the Chapter, set up the display at the site, and supervise the display while handing out brochures and answering questions.
- Events take place during the day and in the evening on both weekdays and weekends.

Public Affairs

- This is a **crisis stand-by position**.
- In general, volunteers act as a liaison between the disaster relief operation and the media.
- More specifically, volunteers share disaster relief and recovery information with the media so that relief efforts and services available to those affected by the emergency are known and supported by the community.
- Volunteers must understand the work of the American Red Cross, complete American Red Cross media training before working directly with the media, value the urgency for the public's need to know, and protect privacy rights.
- Volunteers must be willing and able to respond a minimum of one day per week during an emergency, and volunteers must have the experience to work directly with the media and go live.

Administrative and Chapter Support (All Departments)

All WCARC departments and programs need administrative support. Volunteers assist with many office tasks, including regular data entry, filing, typing, bookkeeping, reception, bulk mailings and periodic phone calling. On an ongoing basis, volunteers assist with special projects that are designed to realize the Chapter's strategic goals.

Administrative and Chapter Support

- Volunteers operate office machines, including the copier, fax machine, computers, calculators, shredder, phones, postage machine, etc.
- Volunteers assist with office projects; including filing, file set-up, general organizing, outgoing mail preparation and sorting, spreadsheet design and use, newsletter layout and production, and word processing.
- Weekday, daytime availability is required.
- Some duties require basic computer skills and the ability to learn new programs.

Front Desk

We only have one chance to make a good first impression. The Front Desk is that one chance, and it is extremely important that every blood donor, financial donor, volunteer, client, service provider, and community member be welcomed to our organization – whether over the phone, through email, or in person – in a way that leads to a positive relationship with the WCARC.

Front Desk

- Volunteers greet and assist walk-in guests; answer and direct telephone calls and navigate telephone operations; and assist with light clerical duties.
- During times of high activity, front desk volunteers may also act as greeters. Greeters are assigned to the area in front of the reception desk as the first point of contact for guests and to keep the flow of traffic in the lobby moving smoothly. Greeters welcome guests, provide information, direct guests to the appropriate service location, or help locate another staff person to assist them.
- Weekday, daytime availability is required.

Building Logistics

It is extremely important that the WCARC Chapter Headquarters be well maintained so that the building can continue to serve the organization, and thus the community and its members, for many years to come.

Building Management

- Volunteers with building management experience and technical knowledge recognize and coordinate the need for repairs and supervise the outside contractors and/or volunteers who are completing the repairs.

Inventory

- Maintain supplies inventory and order both office and general building supplies.

Handypersons

- Perform light carpentry work and small repairs that do not require a licensed contractor to complete.

**Thank you again for your interest in becoming a
Washtenaw County American Red Cross volunteer!**

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the
Director of Volunteer Resources at (734) 971-5300 or volunteer@wc-redcross.org.