

ANNEX 7
SHELTER MANAGEMENT

I. GENERAL

- A. Shelter management includes estimating the number of evacuees that may need sheltering, planning for shelter space, coordinating resources, and coordinating shelter openings. Hurricane evacuation shelter requirements are calculated using a percent of the vulnerable population. The conglomerates identify space to fulfill sheltering requirements.
- B. To coordinate shelter openings, public hurricane evacuation shelters are identified as voluntary evacuation shelters, mandatory evacuation shelters, and reserve shelters.
- C. The following Conglomerate Annexes contain detailed shelter listings by county. County emergency management, SCEMD, and the American Red Cross (ARC) coordinate shelter locations. The South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS), the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC), and the ARC coordinate shelter staffing and management.
- D. Special Medical Needs Shelters are provided for evacuees requiring special medical attention and their caregivers.

II. PUBLIC SHELTER OPENING PROCEDURES AND PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

- A. If the Governor recommends voluntary evacuation, ESF-6 will coordinate with the conglomerate(s) possessing voluntary shelters for the opening of some or all of the voluntary evacuation shelters. If the Governor orders a mandatory evacuation, ESF-6 will coordinate with the conglomerate(s) possessing mandatory shelters for the opening of some or all mandatory evacuation and voluntary evacuation shelters. Note that under certain impending storm conditions (i.e., rapidly intensifying hurricane), shelters previously coordinated to open may remain closed in favor of shelters in other, more favorable locations.
- B. Once the Governor recommends a voluntary evacuation or orders a mandatory evacuation, a designated time by which shelters will open is determined. The shelter opening time for the voluntary evacuation recommendation and mandatory evacuation order is at least four (4) hours after the decision to open shelters is made.
- C. The ARC issues all public announcements about opening public shelters and the time the shelters will open. The public announcement will include the shelter(s) opening time and location. Shelters may open before the announced time. Local chapters will have primary responsibility for these announcements. The announcements will also be consolidated and provided to major media outlets from the State EOC as the information becomes available.

- D. Reserve shelters will open as local officials consider it necessary. For larger storms, the resources for reserve shelters will be staged at the beginning of the mandatory evacuation order. County EOC officials will notify local mass care personnel of the requirement to open reserve shelters. Reserve shelters will be operational within four hours of notification. ARC to minimize confusion announces reserve shelter openings to the public. The reserve shelter public announcement will read to the effect, “The following additional shelters have opened, and are now accepting evacuees”.

III. PUBLIC SHELTER CLOSING PROCEDURES

The procedure for closing hurricane evacuation shelters is described in the following “South Carolina Hurricane Evacuation Shelter Consolidation/Closing Procedure” agreement between SCEMD, DSS, and ARC.

IV. PUBLIC SHELTERING REQUIREMENTS

- A. To plan shelter space for evacuees, the vulnerable population for each conglomerate was analyzed and used to calculate shelter requirements. The vulnerable population consists of all residents and tourists within a Category 4/5-storm surge inundation area and residents living in structures susceptible to wind damage within each conglomerate. The Army Corps of Engineers determined the vulnerable population shelter requirements during the hurricane evacuation restudy.
- B. The shelter requirements are a planning goal for evacuation shelter emergency capacity. The ARC determines the emergency capacity using 15 sq. ft. per person. Shelter requirements may change annually due to the increasing coastal population and to the increase of those living in vulnerable structures.
- C. The following table shows the three (3) conglomerates’ total estimated vulnerable population and shelter requirements:

SC Vulnerable Population & Sheltering Requirements	
Total Vulnerable Population	10% Shelter Requirement
1,537,617	153,762

V. SPECIAL MEDICAL NEEDS SHELTERS

- A. During a hurricane evacuation affecting the Coastal Hurricane Conglomerate counties, Special Medical Needs Shelters (SMNS) will open in a county at the same time as public shelters. Western Conglomerate requirements are different. For all conglomerate counties, a SMNS will not close until the SEOC approves, and all shelter clients can return home or relocate to a suitable alternate location.
- B. DHEC, DSS, and county emergency management agencies determined locations of shelters appropriate for those persons with special medical needs. DSS and DHEC have agreements with these facilities. The SMNS are listed in the following conglomerate Annexes.

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ATTACHMENT A, ANNEX 7

**South Carolina Hurricane Evacuation Shelter Consolidation/Closing
Procedural Agreement****1.0 Overview**

In South Carolina, the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) is the lead State agency for Mass Care Emergency Support Function (ESF-6). The American Red Cross (ARC) selects, opens, and maintains shelters in coordination with SCDSS and County Emergency Management Divisions (EMDs). The State of South Carolina and the ARC are committed to operating shelters before and after a hurricane until evacuees have access to their housing or other shelter becomes available.

This procedure applies to closing or consolidation of hurricane evacuation shelters which function in accordance with current regulations. This procedure does not apply to Special Medical Needs Shelters (SMNS) or shelters managed by other agencies or organizations.

ARC-managed shelters are open to the public without discrimination of any kind. ARC will not deter evacuees from leaving the shelter. However, authority to return to an area resides with the local government.

2.0 Procedures**2.1 Threat Determination**

Hurricane evacuation shelters will remain open while the threat of the storm exists in the vicinity of the shelter. ARC will keep shelters open or in an alert phase (ready to be opened) as long as there is still a possible threat to South Carolina.

Before shelters are closed, the level of threat remaining will be assessed. The County Emergency Management Director and the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) Operations Manager will determine when the threat has passed. The County Emergency Management Director will relay the threat determination decision through the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to the local ARC Chapter and the County DSS. The SEOC Operations Manager will notify the SEOC ESF-6. The ARC can then initiate the shelter consolidation/closure decision process.

2.2 Shelter Consolidation/Closing

The decision to close shelters is based on many factors, including the number of evacuees in the shelter, returning destination of the evacuees, location of nearby shelters, available transportation, and housing options. The identification and recommendation on which shelters to close or consolidate are based on the local ARC Chapter's consultation with the County DSS and the County EMD with final approval from the ARC Pre-Landfall Operation Team (PLOT) or the Disaster Relief Operational Headquarters (DRO HQ).

Shelters may be deactivated but remain in an alert phase (ready to be reopened) status in the event evacuees are unable to return home. The ARC PLOT or DRO, SEOC Operations Manager, and SEOC ESF-6 should be consulted for assistance with resolution in the event of a disagreement.

The ARC PLOT or DRO Headquarters will notify the SEOC ESF-6 when shelters are officially closed. ESF-6, in conjunction with SEOC Public Information Officer, will ensure the SEOC staff and Public Information Phone System (PIPS) Manager are informed once a shelter is closed. The ARC will ensure the dissemination of shelter information to the public.

The following options cite two (2) possible scenarios for closing shelters:

Option 1: All the evacuees can return home, and there is no need for a shelter. The shelter manager, local ARC Chapter, County DSS, and the County EMD will determine if evacuees might need to return to a shelter based on initial damage reports. All evacuees must be given time to go home and inspect their homes for damage. After that, the shelter may close with the agreement of the ARC PLOT or DRO in consultation with the SEOC ESF-6.

Option 2: Reduced number of shelter occupants. As the number of persons needing shelter is reduced, the local ARC Chapter will work closely with County EMD and County DSS to determine the best solutions for those still needing temporary housing. Shelter status may change with the agreement of the ARC PLOT or DRO in consultation with the SEOC ESF-6.

A variety of congregate and/or individual solutions may be agreed upon. Possibilities include consolidating shelters or establishing a smaller shelter in another school or non-school facility. After surveying all the shelters in the county and determining the number of evacuees needing shelter, the local ARC Chapter will determine the best alternative and must receive approval for their proposed temporary housing agreements. This approval must be obtained from the ARC PLOT or DRO. If the disaster is over and the population needing housing has been clearly identified, the local ARC Chapter may include in their proposed plan a consideration for lodging in motels.

If consolidation is the best option, shelter residents will be given advanced notice, with detailed directions to the designated shelter and the telephone number of the local ARC Chapter for questions. If transportation is required, ARC will work with the local government, private and non-profit agencies to identify resources. A sign will be posted in a prominent location at the closed shelter directing any additional evacuees to the consolidated shelter's location. The sign will include directions and the telephone number of the local ARC Chapter.

If an alternative method of sheltering is implemented, the posted sign will indicate the telephone number of the local ARC Chapter for questions and sheltering arrangements.

If evacuees were pre-disaster homeless, the local ARC Chapter will work with local human services staff to confirm pre-disaster living conditions and options available for the evacuees.