

Local Disaster Recovery

Staffing Guide

Jennifer J. Shafer, Matthew R. Peterson, Philip R. Baylor,
Kerry R. McCarthy

Report ZASI4RI September 2014



LMI

RESEARCH INSTITUTE

ADVANCING THE SCIENCE OF GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT

LOCAL DISASTER RECOVERY

STAFFING GUIDE

REPORT ZAS14R1 · SEPTEMBER 2014

JENNIFER J. SHAFER
MATTHEW R. PETERSON
PHILIP R. BAYLOR
KERRY R. MCCARTHY

Development of this guide was supported by the LMI Research Institute. Many representatives of local, state, federal, and non-profit recovery organizations also provided input, expertise, and review of this document during the various stages of research and writing.

The authors would like to extend our thanks to the emergency management and community planning professionals that made this document possible.

The views, opinions, and findings contained in this report are those of LMI and should not be construed as an official agency position, policy, or decision, unless so designated by other official documentation.

Copyright © 2014 LMI. All rights reserved.

Contents

STATE AND FEDERAL COORDINATION	1
COORDINATION DURING A CATASTROPHIC EVENT	3
RECOVERY ORGANIZATION	4
Committee-Based Structure	8
ICS Structure	9
LOCAL RECOVERY STAFFING PROCESS	11
Step 1: Identify Recovery Needs	11
Step 2: Identify Staffing Shortages	12
Step 3: Secure Staffing Resources.....	14
Step 4: Manage Staff.....	20
CONCLUSION	22
APPENDIX A. RECOVERY ACTIVITIES AND POSITIONS	
APPENDIX B. ABBREVIATIONS	

Figures

Figure 1. Community-Focused Recovery.....	3
Figure 2. The Relationship of Management, Coordination, and Implementation	7
Figure 3. Organizational Structure for Hillsborough County Recovery Activities.....	9
Figure 4. Organizational Structure for Fairfax County Recovery Activities.....	10
Figure 5. Recovery Staffing Process.....	11
Figure 6. Sources for Filling Staff Gaps	14

Tables

Table 1. Essential Disaster Recovery Activities	4
Table 2. Transfer.....	16
Table 3. Volunteer Organizations and Volunteers	17
Table 4. Mutual Aid	18
Table 5. Contract	19
Table 6. Hire	19

Local Disaster Recovery Staffing Guide

The *Local Disaster Recovery Staffing Guide* helps local officials and community leaders identify and fill the human resource shortages associated with a disaster recovery operation. It is aligned with the *National Disaster Recovery Framework* (NDRF), which recommends activities that local governments should address—both pre-disaster and post-disaster—to achieve long-term disaster recovery.

This guide begins where the NDRF leaves off by outlining a process and practices to effectively staff community disaster recovery activities. It is paired with the *Disaster Recovery Positions Library*, which describes more than 50 positions that could be filled to conduct the full range of local recovery activities. The guide and position descriptions are scalable for the size of the community and the recovery effort. Smaller communities recovering from less severe events will require fewer positions.

The *Disaster Recovery Staffing Guide* is designed so that it can be used before or after a disaster to support a community's long-term recovery staffing:

- ◆ If you are reading this guide *pre-disaster*, we suggest you focus on developing relationships with organizations that could provide mutual aid or volunteers for recovery activities. Step 3, *Securing Staffing Resources*, covers the types of organizations you should consider reaching out to as well as an explanation of how to develop memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with those partnering organizations.
- ◆ If you are reading this guide *post-disaster*, we suggest you focus on Step 1, *Identify Recovery Needs*, and Step 2, *Identify Staffing Shortages*. These sections will help you identify the types of human resources, including short-term and long-term needs, and estimate the numbers required to meet the long-term recovery challenges you face.

STATE AND FEDERAL COORDINATION

Local governments have the primary role in planning and managing a community's recovery; however, local emergency management organizations should actively seek out state and federal government assistance, especially with regards to long-term disaster recovery staffing. State and federal government agencies, as well as private-sector organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), often provide resources to augment local government efforts.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) developed the NDRF to promote effective disaster recovery and support coordination efforts.¹ It replaces and expands the concepts embedded in *National Response Framework* (NRF) Emergency Support Function (ESF) #14, Long-Term Community Recovery, and includes specific leadership, organizational structure, planning guidance, and other components needed to coordinate continuing recovery support to individuals, businesses, and communities. The NDRF, like the NRF, seeks to establish an operational structure and develop a common planning framework.

The NDRF builds upon recovery support functions (RSFs), which include

- ◆ community planning and capacity building,
- ◆ economic recovery,
- ◆ health and social services,
- ◆ housing,
- ◆ infrastructure systems, and
- ◆ natural and cultural resources.

The federal government, as well as several states, organizes local recovery support as outlined in the NDRF. For this reason, local governments should align with the NDRF where it is appropriate for their communities. Communities often use the NDRF as a foundational resource that can be customized to meet specific local needs.

All disasters are local and so, too, are all recovery efforts. While recovery is a community-focused effort, partnerships at every level support recovery activities. States support recovery activities, oversee regional coordination, and act as a conduit to federal recovery assistance programs. The federal government facilitates support through the RSFs when local and state capacity is overwhelmed.

Figure 1 shows that higher-level government support is encouraged through two-way communication.

¹ FEMA, *National Disaster Recovery Framework: Strengthening Disaster Recovery for the Nation*, September 2011.

Figure 1. Community-Focused Recovery



Source: FEMA, *National Disaster Recovery Framework: Strengthening Disaster Recovery for the Nation*, September 2011.

State or federal government organizations can provide resource support during response and early recovery operations. For example, state government employees sometimes provide guidance or augment local resources by filling local recovery roles that are similar to their state-level positions. In the longer-term, the local community usually takes on most, if not all, of the staffing burden.

Regional development organizations also are important partners during long-term disaster recovery. Organizations throughout the country, such as councils of government, regional planning commissions, and economic development districts, assist local communities. These groups help communities apply for federal funding, manage loan funds to support local businesses, assist in building community consensus, provide technical assistance, and dedicate staff time to fill local resource gaps.

COORDINATION DURING A CATASTROPHIC EVENT

After a catastrophic disaster a community may seek significant support from state and federal governments. Local emergency management organizations may be overwhelmed by the volume of recovery activities and request that under their direction, recovery activities be heavily supported by other levels of government.

Established processes (discussed later in this guide) may be superseded by key decisions about staffing in a catastrophic event, including the following:

- ◆ *What are the anticipated federal, state, county, and NGO roles in each recovery activity?*
After a catastrophic event, these groups often assume a key role or heavily support an activity under the community’s direction; thus reducing the need for local staffing support.
- ◆ *What role will the local government play in each required activity?*
The affected community needs to determine what activities will be executed solely or primarily by the local government in a catastrophic event. These activities will have the greatest staffing requirement.

RECOVERY ORGANIZATION

Understanding that every community and disaster is different and has unique requirements, we do not recommend a specific organizational structure for recovery oversight. Instead, we focus on local recovery activities (listed in Table 1), which we consider essential to recovery operations.

Table 1 includes a description of each recovery activity, the associated required capabilities, and the potential recovery positions that map to each activity. We acknowledge that some positions cross multiple recovery activities. Instead of mapping each to multiple activities, we list the position where personnel spend the majority of their time; in other words, the “best fit” activity. Descriptions of each position are available in the *Disaster Recovery Positions Library*.

Table 1. Essential Disaster Recovery Activities

Recovery activity	Activity description and capabilities	Potential positions
Leadership and Administration	Provide overall management, strategic direction, administrative support, and communication of the recovery effort. Capabilities to support this recovery activity include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ recovery management, ◆ legal expertise, ◆ communication to the general public, and ◆ record keeping. 	Local Disaster Recovery Manager Legal Advisor Recovery Transition Leader Public Information Officer Records Manager
Policy and Oversight	Advise recovery leadership on general direction, overarching policies, and prioritization of recovery efforts. Capabilities to support this recovery activity include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ representation of diverse interests, ◆ communication and coordination among community organizations and leaders, and ◆ strategic planning. 	Local Recovery Advisory Board

Table 1. Essential Disaster Recovery Activities

Recovery activity	Activity description and capabilities	Potential positions
Community Outreach	<p>Communicate and collaborate with volunteers and key stakeholders.</p> <p>Capabilities to support this recovery activity include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ communication and ◆ coordination of volunteers and donations. 	<p>Volunteer Coordinator</p> <p>Donations Coordinator</p>
Funding and Financial Management	<p>Manage financial procedures, grants, contracts, and financial records, including public and individual assistance.</p> <p>Capabilities to support this recovery activity include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ fund development, ◆ accounting, ◆ auditing, and ◆ contracts management. 	<p>Funding and Financial Management Coordinator</p> <p>Public Assistance Coordinator</p> <p>Individual Assistance Coordinator</p> <p>Grants Writer/Researcher</p> <p>Accountant</p> <p>Auditor</p> <p>Contracts Manager</p>
Community Planning and Land Use	<p>Support community redevelopment, land use, and zoning activities and the development of community plans, while incorporating hazard mitigation and sustainability.</p> <p>Capabilities to support this recovery activity include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ community and hazard mitigation planning; ◆ zoning, floodplain, and land use planning; ◆ Americans with Disability Act (ADA) compliance; and ◆ project management. 	<p>Community Planning and Land Use Coordinator</p> <p>Community Planner</p> <p>Hazard Mitigation Manager</p> <p>Sustainability Specialist</p> <p>Zoning/Land Use Specialist</p> <p>Floodplain Specialist</p> <p>Disability (ADA) Compliance Specialist</p> <p>Education Specialist</p> <p>Recovery Project Manager</p>
Housing Recovery	<p>Facilitate the rehabilitation, reconstruction, and compliance of destroyed and damaged housing and develop new long-term housing options when necessary.</p> <p>Capabilities to support this recovery activity include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ housing planning and ◆ permit and building code compliance. 	<p>Housing Recovery Coordinator</p> <p>Housing Planner</p> <p>Housing Inspector</p> <p>Property Acquisition Specialist</p> <p>Building Code Specialist</p> <p>Permit Processing Specialist</p>
Infrastructure Recovery	<p>Restore infrastructure systems and services to support a viable, sustainable community and improve infrastructure resilience.</p> <p>Capabilities to support this recovery activity include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ public works/utilities management, ◆ civil and structural engineering, ◆ water management, ◆ debris management and ◆ transportation planning. 	<p>Infrastructure Recovery Coordinator</p> <p>Public Works Director</p> <p>Transportation Planner</p> <p>Civil/Field Engineer</p> <p>Structural Engineer</p> <p>Debris Manager</p> <p>Utility Systems Manager</p> <p>Water Manager</p> <p>Wastewater Manager</p> <p>Hydrologist</p>

Table 1. Essential Disaster Recovery Activities

Recovery activity	Activity description and capabilities	Potential positions
Natural and Cultural Resources Recovery	Protect, preserve, conserve, rehabilitate, and restore natural and cultural resources and historic properties. Capabilities to support this recovery activity include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ cultural resource management, ◆ natural resource management, and ◆ environmental management. 	Natural and Cultural Resources Recovery Coordinator Cultural Resource Specialist Natural Resource Specialist Environmental Specialist
Economic Recovery	Sustain or rebuild businesses and employment, and develop economic opportunities that result in a sustainable and economically resilient community. Capabilities to support this recovery activity include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ economic planning and ◆ agricultural planning. 	Economic Recovery Coordinator Economic Planner Agricultural Planner Business Assistance Case Manager
Public Health and Welfare	Restore the public health, healthcare, and social service networks to promote the health and well-being of affected individuals. Capabilities to support this recovery activity include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ public health management, ◆ public welfare management, and ◆ case management. 	Public Health and Welfare Coordinator Individual Assistance Case Manager Epidemiologist

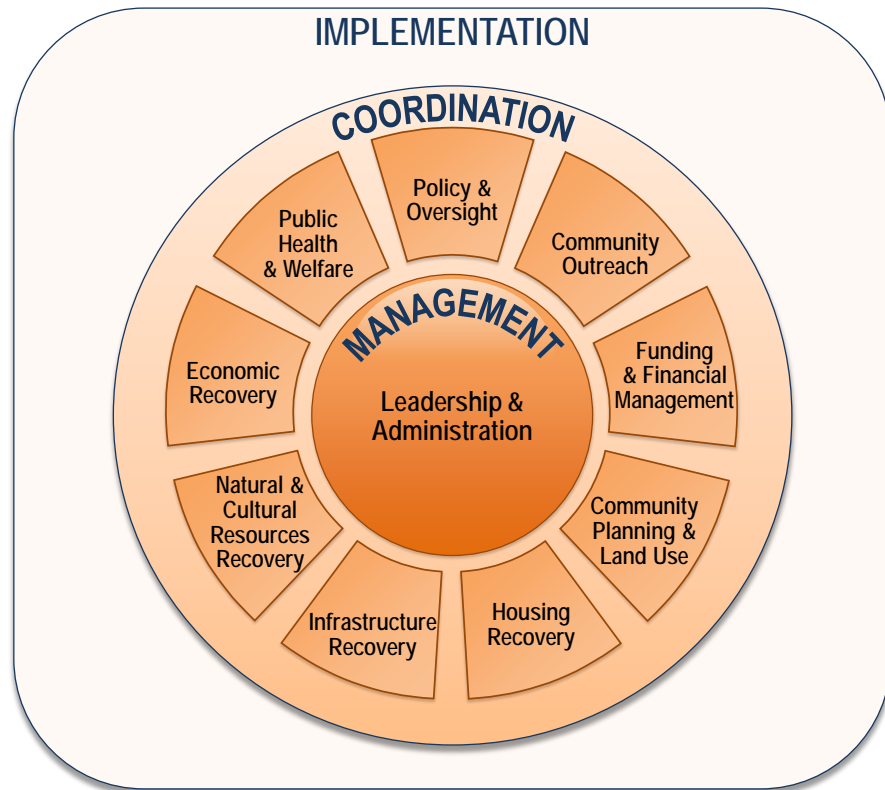
Communities need to provide the critical staff support for each recovery activity at one or more of the following levels:

- ◆ Management—Provide leadership, strategic direction, and administrative support to the recovery effort (e.g., Local Disaster Recovery Manager).
- ◆ Coordination—Play a connecting role among staff levels and among recovery officials and the general public, external stakeholders, etc. (e.g., Housing Recovery Coordinator).
- ◆ Implementation—Execute recovery activities. (e.g., Housing Inspector).

Figure 2 illustrates the correlation of these three levels. The relationship among the levels is not inherently hierarchical, a reflection of the overlapping and diverse staffing needs of most communities.

Managing recovery activities to align with recovery planning lies at the center of the organization. From there, activities are coordinated with partner organizations and governments. The decisions made by management and coordination levels are enacted by the implementation levels to achieve recovery objectives.

Figure 2. The Relationship of Management, Coordination, and Implementation



Communities should staff positions at these three levels based on the scale of the recovery effort. For smaller communities or less severe disasters, communities should focus first on the management and coordination positions. For example, a housing recovery coordinator may be able to perform one or more of the implementation positions, including the housing inspector role, during a smaller recovery effort. Recovery from more significant events may require the community to fill each of the implementation positions to adequately staff recovery activities. Appendix A includes a visual of the positions by recovery activity and level of support (i.e., management, coordination, and implementation).

Although there are many variations of recovery structures, the two most common organizational models are a committee-based structure and an incident command system (ICS) structure. Local jurisdictions should consider adapting one or both of these models to facilitate the management, coordination, and implementation of recovery activities within the unique context of their communities.

Committee-Based Structure

Some communities choose to organize long-term recovery efforts using a technical committee structure, which has the advantage of representing the diverse needs and interests in the local community. A committee-based approach is more flexible than the ICS structure, and committees can be created based on existing government structures. The committee structure also tends to best facilitate collaboration and coordination within the local community.

Committee Structure

Overview: A task force represents the community's interests; technical advisory committees serve as the working bodies.

Pro: Flexible organization that encourages collaboration and can be designed based on pre-existing government structures.

Con: More difficult to define clear lines of decision making.

In a committee-based structure, a task force (with broad-based representation of community interests) and a larger stakeholder group (with many common members) oversee the reconstruction process and act as the overall recovery advisory committee. In some cases the advisory committee is a local government group, in others it is a non-governmental group.

The stakeholder group is organized into technical advisory committees that serve as the working bodies that generate ideas, coordinate community participation, and implement specific recovery actions. The technical committee members have the specialized experience that is required during critical recovery activities. Some communities find the committee-based organizational structure cannot designate clear lines of decision making among all parties.

Figure 3 presents one example of a technical committee structure. Hillsborough County, Florida, a county that includes the city of Tampa (with shoreline on Tampa Bay and the Gulf of Mexico), plans to form committees for many of the same recovery activities presented in Table 1.²

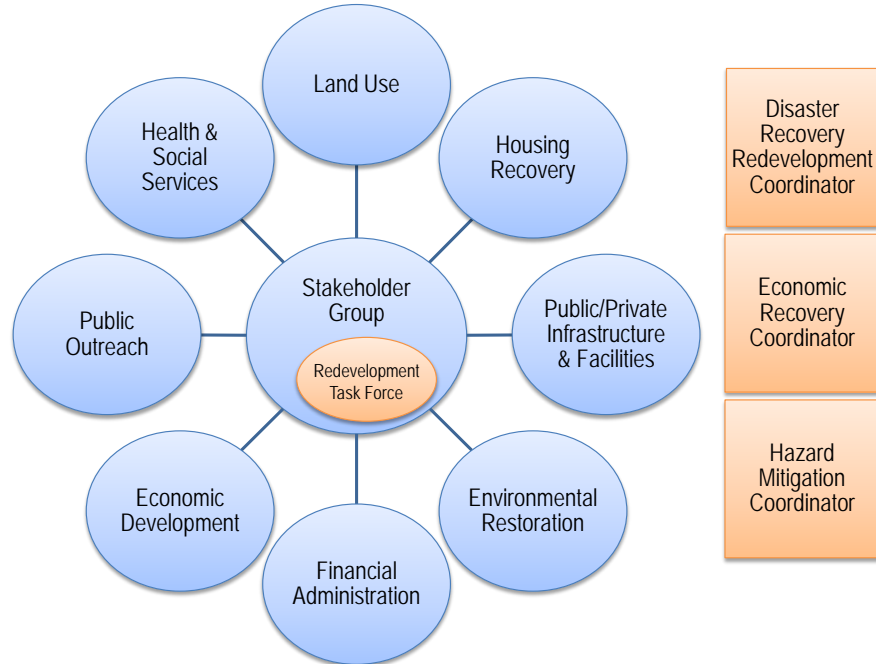
Hillsborough County's Redevelopment Task Force includes representation from county and city government, the private sector, and critical infrastructure and service providers. The task force's pre-disaster responsibilities include establishing criteria to determine the county's long-term redevelopment priorities.

Post-disaster, the task force is charged with reviewing, analyzing, and budgeting for recovery requests. Hillsborough's larger stakeholder group includes the task force members as well as volunteer residents, businesses, and other members of the community who serve in a non-voting capacity. The eight technical committees are chaired by members of the task force.

Hillsborough County also employs three local coordinators who help coordinate state and federal disaster assistance and mitigation efforts.

² *Hillsborough County Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan*, July 2010.

Figure 3. Organizational Structure for Hillsborough County Recovery Activities



ICS Structure

An incident command system is a standard organizing tool that includes best practices for managing disasters of all types and sizes. ICS was designed to support disaster response operations. It is used by all levels of government as well as many private sector organizations and NGOs. ICS is flexible, scalable, and allows communities to adopt an organizational structure to fit the situation.

Some communities opt for an ICS-based structure because it allows them to effectively transition from the emergency support functions documented in the NRF to the recovery support functions outlined in the NDRF. Communities following the ICS structure begin long-term recovery activities as a position in the planning section of the response effort.

The advantage of an ICS-based recovery structure is the clear lines of authority and defined command and control structure. It also provides a direct link to common state, federal, and neighboring local recovery support structures. However, some communities find this organizational structure to be too hierarchical and rigid to effectively support recovery operations at the community level.

ICS Structure

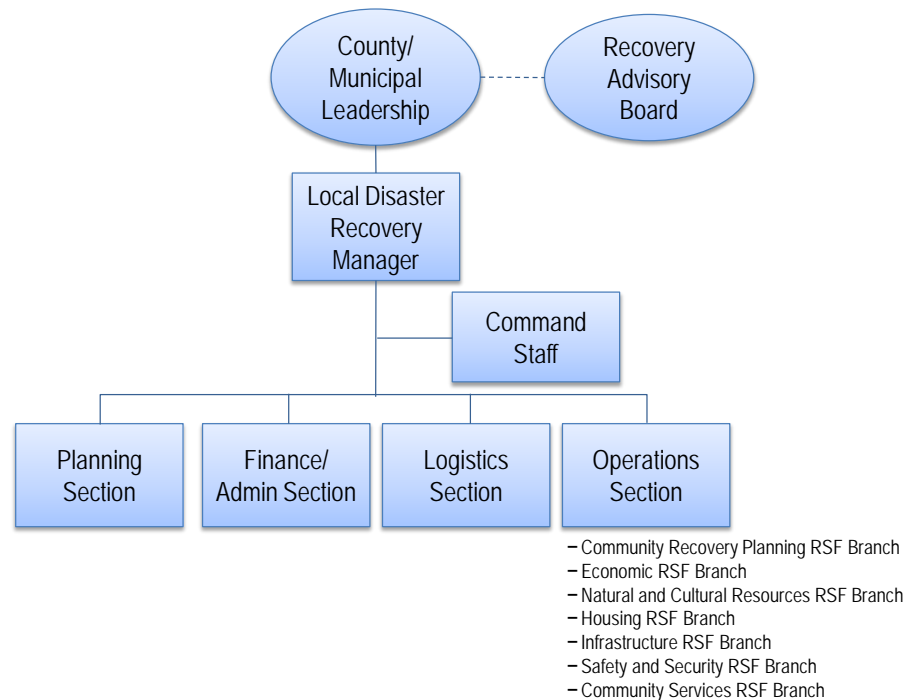
Overview: Recovery Advisory Board provides overall guidance to the government. The Local Disaster Recovery Manager (LDRM) and command staff manage the recovery and activate the sections needed for coordination and implementation.

Pro: Directly links to state, federal, and neighboring local government recovery support structures.

Con: More hierarchical and designed primarily for response operations.

Figure 4 depicts the ICS-based structure Fairfax County, Virginia, (a suburban county of Washington, DC) plans to use for long-term recovery operations following a major disaster.³

Figure 4. Organizational Structure for Fairfax County Recovery Activities



In Fairfax County, the LDRM, with responsibilities as defined in the NDRF, reports to local county and municipal leadership. A recovery advisory board with both public- and private-sector representation provides guidance to government leadership. The command staff that supports the LDRM includes a public information officer, liaison officer, legal advisor, and safety officer. The LDRM may activate the following sections:

- ◆ Planning section—Collects, evaluates, and disseminates incident situation information and intelligence.
- ◆ Finance and administrative section—Tracks and coordinates payment for recovery supplies and services.
- ◆ Logistics section—Requests, tracks, and demobilizes recovery support requirements.
- ◆ Operations section—Executes the recovery mission through RSF branches, as needed.

If required, the advisory board forms subcommittees that align with the RSF branches of the Operations section.

³ *Fairfax County Pre-Disaster Recovery Plan*, 5 January 2012.

LOCAL RECOVERY STAFFING PROCESS

However the community elects to structure the recovery organization, obtaining human resources to support critical recovery activities is a key factor in recovery success. The long-term recovery staffing process we recommend for local communities includes four steps, which are shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Recovery Staffing Process



Step 1: Identify Recovery Needs

To identify the recovery needs of the community, the local leadership will need to determine the required recovery activities for a particular event. Table 1 includes a list and description of key recovery activities. The following questions are useful when trying to identify the needs of a community post-disaster.

- ◆ *What is the hazard?*
The hazard type (such as hurricane, tornado, or human-caused event) and level of severity (such as catastrophic, major, or minor) will drive the recovery needs and the magnitude of required support.
- ◆ *What is the type of damage to each sector of the community?*
Communities may want to seek out existing local government self-assessment tools or needs assessments to assist with answering this question. For example, an assessment of the housing sector could include answers to the following questions:
 - What percentage of housing was destroyed or had major damage?
 - How many families are still displaced from their homes?
 - What are the primary reasons for the continued displacement?
- ◆ *What role will the local or municipal government play in each required recovery activity?*
The recovery activities with local government playing a significant role in executing recovery will have the greatest staffing requirement. If the event is catastrophic, consider the anticipated execution roles of the state and federal government, as well as NGOs under the community's direction.

The result of this step is a list of the required recovery activities and a determination of what role the local government needs to play in each.

Step 2: Identify Staffing Shortages

After determining the required recovery activities, local officials and community leaders should use the following three-step process to identify any staffing shortages for each activity the local community will need to execute:

- 2A. Determine what human resources are needed for each activity.
- 2B. Confirm the availability of existing staff.
- 2C. Conduct a gap analysis to determine staff shortages.

STEP 2A: DETERMINE WHAT HUMAN RESOURCES ARE NEEDED

The first, and perhaps the most difficult, step to identify staffing shortages is to determine what level of effort is needed for each activity. Communities need to answer numerous questions, including the following:

- ◆ What is the scope of the required recovery effort in the activity?
- ◆ What types and numbers of human resources are needed to staff each activity?
- ◆ When are they needed?
- ◆ Where are they needed?

A useful reference is the lessons learned by other communities that recovered from similar events. The result of Step 2A is documentation of time-phased and location-specific staff requirements for each activity.

Another reference is the *Disaster Recovery Positions Library*, which is a repository of descriptions of positions that may be needed to support disaster recovery. The number of *resources* required may be less than the number of *positions* that need to be filled. In many cases, an individual may fill multiple roles or positions. For this reason, the position descriptions include a field that indicates the positions that are closely related. These positions may be filled by one individual performing in multiple roles. For example, the Donations Coordinator and the Volunteer Coordinator are closely related positions. Because these positions require similar skill-sets, they can be filled by one person in less intensive recovery efforts or when resources are limited.

STEP 2B: CONFIRM THE AVAILABILITY OF EXISTING STAFF

The next step is to determine the availability of staff for the lead agency or organization that has primary responsibility for the recovery effort. Ideally, the community will have designated a lead and supporting organization for each recovery activity before an event. If this has not been done pre-disaster, the lead organization must be designated before available staff resources can be identified.

Available staff are individuals in existing staff positions at the lead organization. They may perform different job duties during recovery operations, but they would not require a transfer or other personnel action to assign them to support a community recovery effort.

The local lead organization or agency must answer numerous questions, including the following:

- ◆ How many lead agency personnel are available?
- ◆ What skill sets do they have?
- ◆ When are they available?
- ◆ Where are they available to work?

It is best to have planned for this step pre-event by keeping an updated employee roster (with contact information, skillsets, and availability) for lead and supporting organizations. With good planning, this step will only be a confirmation of that existing information.

STEP 2C: CONDUCT A GAP ANALYSIS TO DETERMINE STAFF SHORTAGES

The lead recovery agency should use the results of steps 2A and 2B to conduct a gap analysis and determine where there are staff shortages. The gap analysis should answer the following questions:

- ◆ What are the shortages in terms of the type and number of human resources?
- ◆ When does the shortage need to be filled?
- ◆ Where does the shortage need to be filled?
- ◆ Which shortages should be filled first?

The result of this step is a prioritized list of personnel resource gaps that the lead recovery organization will need to fill from sources other than the existing human resource pool.

Step 3: Secure Staffing Resources

As Figure 6 illustrates, local officials and community leaders can use several methods to secure qualified resources for recovery activities and fill the gaps identified during Step 2.

Figure 6. Sources for Filling Staff Gaps



Source	Cost	Time to obtain	Fill staffing requirements that are:				
			Short-term	Long-term	Surge	Inherently governmental	Specialized
Transfer	\$	⌚	✓			✓	✓
Volunteer Organizations & Volunteers	\$	⌚	✓	✓	✓		✓
Mutual Aid	\$\$	⌚⌚	✓		✓	✓	✓
Contract	\$\$\$	⌚⌚	✓	✓	✓		✓
Hire	\$\$\$	⌚⌚⌚		✓		✓	✓

SITUATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Determining the right resource for the position depends on the situation. Local government leaders should ask the following questions to identify the ideal source:

- ◆ *Is support for this activity a short-term need?*
Many sources could fill short-term requirements, but communities generally do not hire staff for short-term needs, unless it is a temporary hiring arrangement.

-
- ◆ *Is support for this activity a long-term need?*
Volunteers, contracts, and hires are common sources for long-term staffing needs. Transfers and mutual aid from other organizations are not ideal for long-term staffing support, because those resources have requirements in their lending organization or jurisdiction to which they must return.
 - ◆ *Is it a surge need and if so, what magnitude?*
To fulfill significant surge requirements, communities will look to volunteer (particularly volunteer organizations), mutual aid, and contract support. Transfers are less likely because it may leave the lending organization without enough resources to achieve its own mission. Hiring is a more likely alternative for obtaining a few people, rather than a large surge.
 - ◆ *Is this requirement inherently governmental?*
Positions that are carrying out functions that must be completed by the government are prime candidates for transfer, mutual aid, or the hiring of government staff.
 - ◆ *Does this require a specialized skill, education, or certification?*
Any source can be used to obtain people with a specific skill or experience. To obtain the needed resources, community leaders look for
 - transfers of positions from similar organizations;
 - volunteers with specific credentials from professional associations or retirees who know the subject matter; or
 - mutual aid requests, contract statements or work, or hiring position descriptions that define the resources by the skills, education or credentials required.

COST CONSIDERATIONS

Cost is a consideration when making human resource decisions. To minimize new costs, local governments often obtain human resources first at the local level. Much like the process for declaring emergencies, the local government should look first to internal resources, transfers, and volunteers to fill positions. Then communities may reach out to external sources—mutual aid, contracts, and hiring—which require additional costs.

If local resources are quickly overwhelmed, because of either the type or severity of the disaster, the community will engage state and federal governments for resources (as described earlier under *State and Federal Coordination*). Resources from other levels of government may be available to augment local recovery activities, particularly in the short-term.

TIME CONSIDERATIONS

The time to obtain resources is the final consideration. Within the community, internal transfers and volunteers can be put in place quickly, while it may take some time to advertise or request, identify candidates, and fill positions from mutual aid, contracts, or hires.

To speed the mutual aid process, communities can establish in advance of a disaster mutual aid agreements with nearby jurisdictions. Communities can develop a list of staffing needs that are linked to the magnitude of potential events that can be supported by mutual aid or statewide agencies and organizations. To expedite contracting, the community can establish contingency—or stand-by—contracts or a list of qualified vendors.

SOURCES SUMMARY

Tables 2 through 6 present the advantages, disadvantages, and planning and funding considerations of the five primary ways to obtain staff. A holistic, long-term recovery staffing plan often includes a combination, if not all, of the methods to fill the required positions within a recovery team.

Table 2. Transfer

Summary	Depending on the size and depth of local government departments, the community may borrow human resources from one department to augment another department that is supporting disaster recovery. The internal transfer of staff requires a level of support and commitment from both the lending and the borrowing organizations, as well as human resource procedures to make the transfer.
Advantages	An internal resource may be highly efficient at recovery work because they are familiar with the local community, including its people, culture, information technology (IT) systems, processes, and procedures.
Disadvantages	The internally transferred resources are removed from their regular work responsibilities, which can put a strain on the lending organization. If the lending organization will also support recovery activities, moving resources could harm the lending organization's success in executing recovery activities.
Planning considerations	Local governments plan for effective transfers of internal personnel in different ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Developing a disaster work assignment as part of the position description ◆ Cross-training personnel so they are familiar with recovery-related tasks ◆ Determining who “owns” the resource and pays the resource’s salary during the transfer ◆ Developing agreements for selected positions. Such agreements outline the processes for internal transfers, who “owns” the resource and pays the resource’s salary during the transfer, policies on tenure and salary, and whether the original position is guaranteed after the transfer. It is important to involve the human resources departments of both the lending and receiving organization when reviewing the content of final agreements.
Funding considerations	Grants awarded to the community may have an administration allotment to pay some or all of the salary for staff administering the grant. Communities should research their grant requirements and keep records of staff expenses for audit purposes.

Table 3. Volunteer Organizations and Volunteers

Summary	Volunteers of all types and abilities make it possible to surge recovery activities. Volunteer organizations are pre-formed groups. Volunteers are referred to here as independent volunteers who are not affiliated with any group. To best use volunteers, communities must be organized and manage the influx of support in a way that matches community needs with skilled volunteers.
Advantages	<p>Volunteers offer their services without expectation of pay; therefore, volunteers are a low-cost way to staff recovery efforts.</p> <p>Many volunteers may be familiar with the local community, including its people, culture, IT systems, processes, and procedures.</p> <p>Volunteer groups may have the added advantage of being pre-vetted, trained, and seasoned.</p>
Disadvantages	Local governments have the added challenge of managing volunteer liability and risk. Local leaders should consider whether insurance covers volunteer injury or property damage or loss due to volunteer actions.
Planning considerations	<p>Local governments help ensure volunteers succeed in the recovery environment in several ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Determining which tasks volunteers are approved to do. ◆ Identifying and planning for the involvement of volunteer groups, such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ members of the community emergency response teams (CERT), AmeriCorps, Medical Reserve Corps, or National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) who may have baseline training or community knowledge; ▶ volunteer professionals involved in community planning associations, such as the American Planning Association; ▶ volunteer professionals involved in economic development professional associations, such as Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE); and ▶ recent local government retirees in the discipline needed. ◆ Developing systems to receive spontaneous volunteers, determine their skills, and match them to volunteer positions. Spontaneous volunteers are volunteers who are not affiliated with volunteer groups. ◆ Clearly defining volunteer positions and codes of conduct. ◆ Developing training to equip volunteers for their duties. ◆ Develop a plan for managing volunteer turnover, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ planning for transferring knowledge to volunteers at the beginning of their work on recovery activities and from volunteers throughout recovery activities; ▶ identifying potential replacements; and ▶ cross-training and mentoring potential replacements. ◆ Recording the number of volunteers and volunteer hours and the measures of volunteer output.
Funding considerations	<p>While volunteers do not receive compensation, the community should plan for certain costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Background checks or credentialing ◆ Basic needs, such as food, water, and restrooms ◆ Protective equipment, if they are entering hazardous locations or have hazardous job duties ◆ Reimbursement for expenses, such as travel or work-related expenses.

Table 4. Mutual Aid

Summary	<p>Local governments arrange mutual aid agreements to obtain resources and assistance across jurisdictional lines. Mutual aid starts locally, with local mutual aid agreements between nearby localities. If local resources are overwhelmed, legislation may be in place to support two additional types of mutual aid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Intra-state mutual aid supports local and regional mutual aid efforts within a state, regionally, or within local jurisdictions that cross state boundaries.^a ◆ Inter-state mutual aid supports national mutual aid efforts requested directly between two or more states or territories through approved mutual aid agreements or compacts.^a
Advantages	<p>With mutual aid agreements, credentials are recognized across jurisdictional boundaries. Mutual aid agreements also define the liability and expected reimbursement before an event. Advanced agreements expedite resource deployment and provide clear roles and responsibilities.</p>
Disadvantages	<p>If the event is widespread and multiple jurisdictions are affected, nearby jurisdictions may not be available to support the recovery activities. As a result, local governments will need to seek out a jurisdiction further afield to obtain the necessary resources.</p>
Planning considerations	<p>Local governments develop mutual aid in numerous ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Reaching out to organizations that may have established mutual aid compacts; for example, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), ▶ National Emergency Management Association, ▶ Regional Development Organizations, such as councils of government, regional planning commissions, and economic development districts. ◆ Developing a list of staffing needs linked to potential magnitude of events that can be supported by mutual aid or statewide agencies and organizations. ◆ Contacting representative organizations who would be involved in a long-term recovery board to learn what resources non-profit or for-profit organizations could share. ◆ Developing a template for drafting local mutual aid agreements or MOUs. At a minimum, the agreement should outline each party's obligations, requirements for payment or reimbursement, date of start, and procedure to end the aid. Review the template and final agreements with legal counsel.
Funding considerations	<p>Permanent recovery work is not eligible for FEMA reimbursement; however, grant management work for public assistance is eligible. The requirements for mutual aid costs reimbursements are outlined in <i>DAP9523.6, Mutual Aid Agreements for Public Assistance and Fire Management Assistance</i>.</p>

^a FEMA, DAP9523.6, *Mutual Aid Agreements for Public Assistance & Fire Management Assistance*, 13 August 2007.

Table 5. Contract

Summary	Procuring contractors or consultants to support recovery efforts allows communities to have a flexible workforce. Contracts can be developed as rigidly or flexibly as the community needs to execute the work.
Advantages	Contracts are a mechanism to obtain qualified staff that may draw on experience from past recovery events and specialized expertise to support the community.
Disadvantages	Contracts may be slow to award and cumbersome to manage, especially if local officials are not well-versed in complex contract management.
Planning considerations	Local governments plan for effective contracting by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ checking legislation to determine whether there are provisions for expedited contracting available during emergencies; ◆ developing contingency, or stand-by, contracts or a list of qualified vendors to expedite the contracting process; ◆ developing clear requests for quotes (RFQs), requests for proposals (RFPs), and source selection criteria; and ◆ including a requirement in procurements that the government owns the contractor's product at the end of the contract.
Funding considerations	Emergency funds outside of the budget year funding may need to be used to procure external human resources.

Table 6. Hire

Summary	The local government may select to employ people permanently or temporarily to support disaster recovery. Hiring requires a level of support from the hiring manager and human resources to advertise, select, and on-board the human resources and manage their work on recovery activities.
Advantages	Hiring is a way to obtain qualified staff in the required disciplines. A person's work status as an employee allows them to complete inherently governmental work.
Disadvantages	Hiring may be slow to complete, particularly if processes are not in place to expedite hiring processes in emergency situations.
Planning considerations	Local governments plan for effective hiring by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ checking policies and procedures to determine whether there are provisions for expedited hiring available during emergencies; ◆ developing clear position descriptions to advertise needed positions; and ◆ making use of temporary positions for positions that require only a few months or years of support
Funding considerations	Emergency funds outside of the budget year funding may need to be used to hire human resources.

Step 4: Manage Staff

Once resources are identified and committed, the final step in the process is to manage everything from the onboarding through the dismissal of staff. These activities are closely aligned with an organization's human resources and volunteer coordination procedures.

The sections below outline key considerations to facilitate successful staff management during disaster recovery efforts.

MOBILIZING STAFF

The transition from the response to recovery phase is often slow and gradual, with the two efforts running in parallel for a length of time. Immediately following a disaster, and during response operations, the long-term recovery activities may simply involve a planning cell with a minimal role. At some point, the emergency operations center staff begin to scale back and recovery becomes the focus of community activity. The local government is then responsible for surging staff as needed to execute recovery activities.

Before obtaining any paid or unpaid resources, the local government should review its human resources policies to ensure it has adequate guidelines and procedures to support compensation, work hours and overtime, leave, cost reimbursement, benefits, and workplace training. The community should also consider the following in recovery plans and execution:

- ◆ *Authorization*—Who activates the recovery plan and when is it activated? How are recovery resources informed of their roles?
- ◆ *Time-phased staffing*—Which resources are needed immediately, in the short-term, and in the long-term?
- ◆ *Credentials*—Are credentials, badges, background checks, or other onboarding requirements needed before people begin work?
- ◆ *Training*—If trained resources cannot be found, what just-in-time training could be offered?
- ◆ *Human resource policies*—Are human resources policies in place for paid and unpaid staff? Do any policies need to be developed to cover suspension of normal operations, overtime, or disaster-specific scenarios?
- ◆ *Communication*—How often does the team supporting recovery planning meet and in what forum?

MANAGING STAFF

Managers will guide ongoing work throughout the recovery activities. The number of resources required may change over time based on the needs of the recovery activities. Managers should periodically evaluate workload shifts and staffing availability to determine if new resources are required or if resources should be dismissed or reassigned to different duties.

Recovery operations can be stressful, which can lead to exhaustion, conflict, and health problems. All resources supporting recovery should be trained to recognize signs of distress and know the procedures for relieving that stress.

Because it is demanding and can be lengthy, high volunteer and paid staff turnover is likely. Managers can mitigate the impacts of turnover by identifying potential replacements, cross-training and mentoring potential replacements, and planning for the transfer of knowledge between the outgoing and incoming person.

Finally, managing paid staff and volunteers includes putting in place methods to recognize people's achievements. Recognition could be in the form of a public announcement, awards, or incentive programs.

DE-MOBILIZING STAFF

The slowdown of recovery actions may be gradual as the community reduces human resources over time. Local leaders should consider the priority of releasing human resources when planning the return to normal activities.

Releasing resources will generally occur in the reverse order they were obtained. For example, external resources (contract and mutual aid resources), particularly those supporting short-term requirements, will be released before local resources (transfers and volunteers).

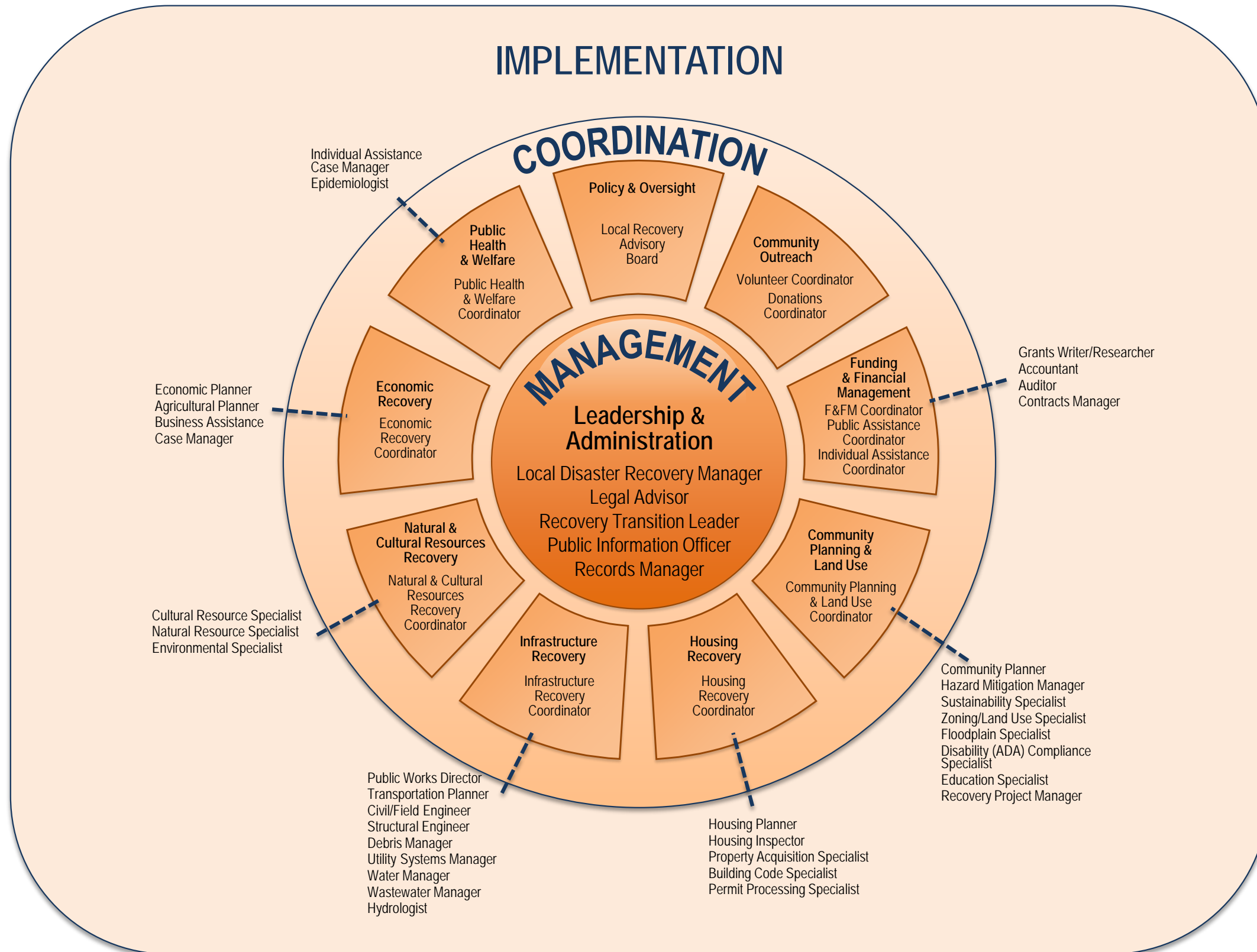
The responsibilities of the position may be another factor that drives the release priority. For example, the Records Manager is usually one of the last positions that a community releases because of the Records Manager's role in preserving and archiving disaster recovery information post-recovery. At some point, the final recovery resources will need to cease operations and return to normal activities. The community should consider the following to execute demobilization:

- ◆ *Time-phased staffing*—What is the priority for releasing staff? Which resources may be released first, next, and last?
- ◆ *Authorization*—Who authorizes a return to normal functions and responsibilities? How are recovery resources informed of the demobilization?
- ◆ *After-action reporting*—How will the community capture lessons learned?
- ◆ *Documentation*—How will the community archive documentation related to recovery activities for future audits or historical records?

CONCLUSION

Now that you have read the *Local Disaster Recovery Staffing Guide* and have an understanding of the processes for filling gaps in staffing, potential organizational structures for recovery, and sources to obtain human resources, we recommend you review the *Disaster Recovery Positions Library*. The library describes more than 50 positions that could be filled to conduct the local recovery activities that this guide discusses.

APPENDIX A. RECOVERY ACTIVITIES AND POSITIONS



APPENDIX B. ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Americans with Disability Act
CERT	community emergency response team
EMAC	Emergency Management Assistance Compact
ESF	Emergency Support Function
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
ICS	incident command system
IT	information technology
LDRM	local disaster recovery manager
MOU	memorandum of understanding
NDRF	National Disaster Recovery Framework
NGO	non-governmental organization
NRF	National Response Framework
NVOAD	National Volunteer Organization Active in Disaster
RFP	request for proposal
RFQ	request for quote
RSF	recovery support function
SCORE	Service Corps of Retired Executives