

Early Responders vs. Volunteers

Disaster Responders are individuals who:

- Are 18 years of age and older, who make up a team up to 7 people.
- Have completed the Safe Gatherings Training and background check (<https://www.greatplainsumc.org/safegatherings>) and completed an 8-hour UMCOR training (ERT classes offered through the Great Plains Conference.) Cost for Safe Gatherings is \$35 and ERT is \$25. Safe Gatherings online training and all supporting documents must be submitted within 10 days of the training date.
- Can give 3 days at a time for deployment and be self-sustaining.
- Are able to work long days in all types of weather, not afraid of heights, able to work on the ground, carry heavy objects, and perform other needed job functions. These are just some examples of what might be called upon to perform.
- Are trained and badged and may respond to disasters within their own community and/or district without an official invitation.
- Have opportunities to respond to disasters outside of the local community, district, conference, or jurisdiction through a required, official invitation which will be filtered from the inviting community to the Conference Disaster Response office.



Watch the [GPconnect](#), [conference calendar](#), and [Great Plains Facebook page](#) for upcoming ERT trainings and recertification courses.

Volunteers:

- May be requested by the Great Plains Conference Disaster Response once the scene of disaster is secured, search and rescue operations are over, and recovery needs have been assessed.
- Must have completed the Safe Gatherings Training and background check (<https://www.greatplainsumc.org/safegatherings>).
- Must be at least 16 years of age.
- Do not have to pay for an ERT course, but may be responsible for costs of personal travel, equipment/work gear, etc.
- Work on short-term projects, are trained on-site and are not regularly deployed as part of a commissioned Disaster Response Team.

[Sign up to be on a list of available volunteers for 2019 flood relief.](#)