



## **Spiritual Needs Committee**

**(This is not meant to be an exhaustive list rather, a synopsis of what may be expected)**

The Spiritual Needs Committee in emergency management is a specialized group that coordinates faith-based and community resources to provide holistic support to survivors and first responders during a crisis. These committees operate across all phases of disaster—from preparedness and immediate response to long-term recovery—to foster resilience and holistic healing. The core functions include:

### **1. Direct Disaster Spiritual Care (DSC)**

- **Providing Spiritual First Aid:** Helping survivors draw upon their own spiritual perspectives and beliefs as a source of strength and hope.
- **Safe Spaces:** Establishing multi-faith areas for meditation, prayer, or mourning.
- **Meeting Religious Needs:** Facilitating access to sacred texts/objects and arranging dietary accommodations (e.g., Kosher or Halal).
- **Grief Support:** Providing dignified support for death notifications and assisting in the management of the deceased in a culturally respectful manner.

### **2. Emergency Operations Integration**

- **Advising Command:** Acting as a liaison between incident command, emergency managers, and the diverse faith communities in the affected area.
- **Resource Coordination:** Preventing duplication of services by organizing spontaneous volunteers and coordinating multi-agency spiritual responders.

### **3. Community Resiliency and Recovery**

- **Long-Term Support:** Assisting communities in processing grief and trauma long after immediate emergency services have demobilized.
- **Anniversaries and Memorials:** Helping survivors and communities plan sensitive, culturally appropriate commemorative events on disaster anniversaries.
- **Referrals:** Identifying signs of deep trauma or psychological distress and connecting individuals with professional mental health services.

### **4. Guiding Principles**

- **Respect & Neutrality:** Ensuring all services are offered with cultural sensitivity and dignity, explicitly avoiding proselytizing or attempting to convert survivors.
- **Empowerment:** Supporting and empowering local congregations and support systems, which are typically the first to respond and the last to leave a disaster zone.

If you are interested in joining this committee and/or would like more information, please reach out to the Chair, Kevin Hardy: [Kevin@mwcn.online](mailto:Kevin@mwcn.online). Meetings will be scheduled. Please reach out for more information!