

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Policy

Purpose

To establish a consistent policy for managing employee participation in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) assignments—whether volunteer-based or requested—while ensuring that County operations and staffing needs are maintained.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Rockdale County.

Policy Statement

Employees may be permitted to volunteer or be deployed to assist FEMA during federal emergencies, subject to approval based on operational needs. Requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the employee's Department Director and Human Resources (HR).

The Civilian Reservist Emergency Workforce (CREW) Act of 2021 expanded USERRA to include FEMA Reservists. USERRA protects the job rights of FEMA Reservists while they are deployed to disasters, emergencies, and critical training. This includes protection from discrimination, penalization, or loss of employee benefits because of their deployment.

Definitions

- **FEMA Assignment:** A temporary deployment to support FEMA operations during an emergency or disaster.
- **Volunteer Deployment:** Non-mandatory participation initiated by the employee for FEMA relief efforts.
- **Official Deployment:** A formal assignment requested or coordinated through a federal/state agency.

Guidelines

1. Request Process

- Employees must submit a written request on the FEMA assignment Request Form for FEMA deployment, including:
 - FEMA invitation or mission details
 - Anticipated deployment dates and duration
 - Contact information for FEMA assignment coordinator
- A FEMA Assignment Request Form must be completed and approved by:
 - Employee's Department Director
 - Human Resources

2. Approval Criteria

- Approval is subject to:
 - Current operational and staffing needs
 - Duration of absence
 - Essential duties of the employee's position

3. Leave Status

- Time away for a FEMA assignment will typically be unpaid leave, unless:
 - The assignment qualifies under a mutual aid agreement or emergency response program.
 - Employee elects to use accrued vacation, compensatory time, or personal leave
- FMLA does not typically apply unless the employee is injured or has a qualifying health condition.

4. Benefits Continuation

- Employees may continue benefits while on unpaid leave if they pay their portion of premiums.
- HR will provide a continuation of benefits form, if needed.

5. Job Protection

- While the County supports civic engagement, job protection is not guaranteed for non-county sponsored FEMA deployments unless otherwise covered under law.
- Reinstatement will be considered based on department needs and availability.

6. Reporting Obligations

- Employees must:
 - Notify HR and their supervisor of their return date
 - Submit documentation of FEMA service upon return
 - Comply with any applicable return procedures

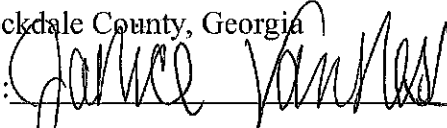
Upon completion of their deployment, FEMA Reservists have the ability to return to their full-time employment. FEMA Reservists will be reinstated to their previous or a similar position if certain conditions are met, such as timely reporting back to work.

By understanding and adhering to these guidelines, Rockdale County can effectively handle FEMA deployment requests from employees and ensure compliance with USERRA and the CREW Act of 2021.

Board of Commissioners

Rockdale County, Georgia

By: _____



JaNice VanNess, Chair

Attest: _____

By: _____

Jennifer Rutledge, County Clerk

Approved this 7 day of September, 2025

FEMA Assignment Request Form

Rockdale County Human Resources

This form must be completed and approved prior to any employee deployment or volunteer service with FEMA.

Employee Information

Employee Name:	
Employee ID:	
Department:	
Position Title:	
Supervisor Name:	

FEMA Assignment Information

FEMA Assignment Title/Description:	
Deployment Start Date:	
Deployment End Date:	
FEMA Point of Contact & Phone/Email:	

Leave and Coverage

Please indicate how your leave will be covered (check all that apply):

- ☐ Personal Leave
- ☐ Leave Without Pay

Briefly describe how your duties will be covered during your absence:

Approvals

Supervisor Signature/Date:	
Department Director Signature/Date:	
HR Director Signature/Date:	