

Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT) Participation Request Form

EMPLOYEE NAME (LAST, FIRST)	G#
POSITION	DEPARTMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> I have reviewed the requirements of VERT with my supervisor. I understand that participation in VERT is contingent upon approval by my supervisor and may not conflict with my obligations to George Mason University.	
Employee Signature	Date

<input type="checkbox"/> I do not approve of this employee's participation because of his/her ineligibility for the program or due to staffing/business needs.	
<input type="checkbox"/> I understand and approve this employee's participation based on the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with the Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT) program, the employee will be deployed to work at alternate sites during periods of declared emergencies. When deployed, the employee's work hours may vary according to the VERT assignment and he/she will be unavailable to work at George Mason University while deployed.* • My department is responsible for funding the employee's base rate of pay throughout the assignment. • My department is responsible for reimbursing the employee for expenses associated with the assignment (travel, food, etc.).** • Once activated and deployed, non-exempt employees are eligible for overtime compensation in accordance with the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and state policy. My department is responsible for any overtime costs. • Time spent in required training must be considered as work time, whether in class sessions or on-line. Training that must be completed outside of the employee's normal work hours may qualify for overtime compensation if the employee is non-exempt. 	
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Disapproved	
Employee Supervisor Signature	Date
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Disapproved	
Department Head Signature	Date

* VERT Team Leader will verify the employee's participation and submit timesheets to George Mason University for payment.
 ** Department may qualify for federal reimbursement through the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Information on the Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT)

The Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM), in conjunction with the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, and the Virginia Department of Social Services, has developed the Adjunct Emergency Workforce (AEW) to provide opportunities for eligible employees to be assigned to Virginia Emergency Response Teams (VERTs) during periods of declared emergencies.

The initial effort of VERT will focus on the emergency sheltering of Virginia citizens. In the event of the mass evacuation of a large region of Virginia, state government will assume primary responsibility for sheltering affected community members, and there will be a critical need for shelter support staff. Sheltering services offer a wide array of opportunities, from registrars and hospitality coordinators to operations supervisors.

In the next phase of the process, DHRM plans to add additional VERT jobs for the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM), Agriculture, etc. Those jobs will most likely be associated with emergencies that Virginians are more familiar with, such as tropical storms, that stretch VERT resources but aren't catastrophic.

With your support, state government will be able to provide for the comprehensive and orderly delivery of services to Virginians.

You are eligible for participation if:

- Your supervisor formally approves your participation and deployment as needed.
- Your job does not require your presence at work during emergencies.
- You have the required training or are ready to meet the training requirement with some assistance from the VERT/AEW program.

If you would like to become a part of the VERT, please complete the VERT Participation Request Form, located on the front of this document, and have your director, department head, or chair sign to approve your participation and deployment when required.

Have your supervisor maintain the *original* form in your department's files and forward a copy to the Environmental Health and Safety Office, MSN 5E2 or by email at safety@gmu.edu.

Once you have met all eligibility requirements, go to DHRM's EmployeeDirect web site at <https://edirect.virginia.gov/> and register as a participant in this program.

If you have questions about the program, please contact EHS at 703-993-8448 or safety@gmu.edu.

Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT)/AEW Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How are employees compensated?

A: The employee's respective university department is responsible for paying the employee through the normal payroll process.

Q: Does the department get reimbursed?

A: Depending upon the nature of the emergency and whether the situation is declared a disaster at the state or federal level, reimbursement may be available through sum sufficient funds (state) or FEMA (federal).

Q: Is overtime approved or is it straight pay?

A: Because employees are working in their usual positions when participating in the AEW, their usual FLSA classification applies. Non-exempt employees must be compensated at 1.5 times their regular rate of pay for hours worked over 40.

Q: Who pays for the overtime?

A: The employee's university department is responsible for paying the employee the overtime rate.

Q: Is there required training?

A: Yes. Much of the training is available online, and employees need only to be permitted the time to complete the coursework. There may be some hands on training required.

Q: How long is the hands-on training?

A: There are different types of training and the time required for each varies. A class may be as short as ½ day or as long as 3 days. The average is only 1 day. Webinars may be available for certain SMS positions.

Q: What are the costs of the training?

A: There is no cost for the training; however, depending on the training venue there could be costs for mileage or an occasional overnight's lodging and per diem.

Q: Who pays for the training and/or associated costs?

A: All costs are paid by the employee's university department.

Q: Is there a class size requirement?

A: The general requirement for classroom training is 15 registered persons.

Q: How often are trainings provided?

A: Classroom training is conducted annually and usually before hurricane season begins on June 1 and especially before peak season begins on September 1.

Q: Are refresher courses required?

A: Employees are encouraged to access the [Knowledge Center](#) to review:

· Reference Center – Documents, VDSS-OEM1017A State Managed Shelter Program Manual

· Reference Center – Documents, VDSS-OEM1018 Training Matrix

· Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and User Guides for various SMS positions

Q: Who tracks the employees' hours worked?

A: Actual hours worked for employees activated with the AEW will be tracked by team leaders at the VERT/AEW work site.

Q: Do employees need to have their supervisor's approval to participate?

A: Employees are requested to have supervisory approval prior to registering with the AEW. Participation in any activation is subject to supervisory approval, as with any other workplace absence.

Q: If a supervisor denies an employee's request to participate, is an explanation needed?

A: Agencies are encouraged, but not required, to support employee participation in the AEW. No explanation of denied approval is required.

Q: How long would the employee be gone?

A: The duration may vary; however, VERT/AEW participants should expect to be gone for up to two weeks.

Q: Will employees be assigned close to home/work?

A: Every effort will be made to assign VERT/AEW participants to a state shelter near their home/work location.

Q: Where can more information be found?

A: <http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/AdjunctEmergencyWorkforce.html> Employees may register from there as well.