

### **Working With and Serving Disaster Victims**

- Remember at all times that the people you are coming into contact with are fellow Americans who have been through one of the most traumatic events in our country's history. Our planning and actions must take that into consideration. Our plans should be developed to provide the most respect and dignity for the client rather than what may be easiest for our staff.
- Evacuees are allowed to refuse any type of assistance we are offering to provide.
- People brought to our reception centers, shelters and other facilities are free to come and go from these facilities or may decide not to get one of the busses or live at the shelter at all. This is entirely the client's decision, which we must respect.
- Treat every victim, client, co-worker and community member with respect and dignity.
- Do not make assumptions about people.
- Remember these people are recovering from a disaster.
- Show sensitivity and do not take photographs or video of the clients.
- We are here as partners to help with the recovery.
- If you are not sure, ask if the person wants any assistance, he or she will tell you what is needed.
- Speak directly to the person and offer to shake hands.
- Identify yourself and others to a person who is visually impaired.
- Listen to and be patient with a person who is speaking impaired. Ask questions requiring short answers.
- Consider a wheelchair part of a person's private space. Place yourself at eye level for conversation.
- Treat adults like adults. Relax and be yourself.
- Disaster victims should be protected from media and kept from being "on display".

### **Maintain Confidentiality**

- All information about clients and staff is confidential
- Discuss client and business matters only with people who need to know or who can be of help
- Keep discussions in the proper setting and while on duty. Do not discuss client/staff issues in public places.