



2020-2021 Program Manual

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Illinois Disaster Corps Overview

Serve Illinois has pledged to assist with statewide preparedness for, response to and recovery from disasters. There has been a continuing need during times of disaster to have a team of people help manage volunteers. Serve Illinois will provide disaster assistance utilizing the network of national service resources in Illinois, as needed and called up by the local, state and federal emergency management officials. National Service programs can play an integral role in helping prepare for and respond to disasters. Illinois National Service, especially those AmeriCorps*State programs who are direct grantees of the Commission will be participating in disaster response and recovery. Illinois AmeriCorps*State programs are required to commit one member to the Illinois Disaster Corps program unless the program is a professional corps or an education award only. It is acceptable for AmeriCorps*State members to receive hours towards their term of service for participating in local, state, and national level disaster deployments and training.

Disaster Corps members will, in the event of a disaster be running the Volunteer Reception Center (VRC). A VRC is where a large number of unaffiliated volunteers can be efficiently processed and registered to volunteer around the affected community. The aim of a VRC is to affiliate spontaneous volunteers with requesting agencies/service sites by:

1. Registering and interviewing potential volunteers
2. Assigning them to a volunteer opportunity that best meets their needs and skills and the needs of the community
3. Providing them safety training and job training as necessary
4. Issuing them a temporary volunteer ID
5. Covering liability based upon requests of the county

A VRC serves as the administrative branch and liaison between volunteers and affiliated organizations.

If a local unit of government has a need to have assistance in managing volunteers, the local Emergency Management Agency will contact the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA). IEMA will then contact Serve Illinois, who will vet the need and plan accordingly.

In order to become a member of Illinois Disaster Corps, the assigned AmeriCorps member must complete various trainings and register in the deployment system. There is one online class and two classroom based courses that must be completed.

Disaster Corps members will work not only with Serve Illinois but with the American Red Cross (ARC). ARC has the responsibility for the leadership and day-to-day management components of the team itself in cooperation with Serve Illinois.

Responsibilities of AmeriCorps Programs

1. Pick at least one member to represent your program. This is a grant requirement as outlined in the grant agreement. When picking a member, please ensure that they fully understand what they are responsible for as outlined in this manual. It is suggested that the member be technologically savvy due to the multiple online systems necessary to navigate.
2. Also important when picking a member: if in their criminal history background check there is a result, inform the Serve Illinois staff and provide the decision tree as well as both state and FBI background checks regarding this member. As the Disaster Corps members are representing a unit of government and possibly privy to confidential information, a higher standard regarding criminal history must be observed regarding the appropriateness of the member chosen. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.
3. Once the member is determined, please make sure program staff follows up with Serve Illinois staff to let them know who the representative is. An email to the Serve Illinois point of contact with the member's name and contact information fulfills this requirement.
4. As program staff, please make sure the member follows this manual and all the steps outlined within. Serve Illinois staff prefers to work with the program staff rather than the member as staff is the member point of contact. However, Serve Illinois staff is happy to work with members if there are questions that program staff cannot answer. Please note that there are multiple steps and systems to use for the training. Allow enough time for these to be completed-the sooner the better!
5. When the member's term is completed, please advise Serve Illinois staff that the member is no longer representing the program. It is understood that there may be a period of time that the member has left and a new member has not been chosen to represent the program. Please minimize the down time to the best of the program's ability.
6. If a member is continuing in multiple terms, they are welcome to continue to represent the program in Disaster Corps. They do not need to complete the training again. Please advise Serve Illinois staff when this is the case so the records are updated accordingly.

Online Class Instructions

The training curriculum for Illinois Disaster Corps requires one online course from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Below are the instructions how to register for this course. Please note that this course is a pre-requisite to the required classroom courses and must be completed prior to attending the classroom courses.

Independent Study (IS) 244.b: Developing and Managing Volunteers. The course can be located here: <https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-244.b>

This is an interactive web based course, so you must have the internet and around 3-4 hours to complete the course. After the course is completed, you must take the final exam online in order to receive a certificate, which will be e-mailed to you. You should submit the certificate to Serve Illinois in order to receive program credit.

In order to take the final exam, you must obtain a FEMA Student Identification (SID) number.

Step 1: To register for the SID, go to <https://cdp.dhs.gov/femasid>

Step 2: Click on the "Register for a FEMA SID" box.

Step 3: Follow the instructions and provide the necessary information to create your account.

Step 4: You will receive an email with your SID number. You should save this number in a secure location. You will use this when you begin the exam process.

It is recommended that the FEMA SID number be obtained first, and then the course completed second.

Classroom Training Instructions

The training curriculum for Illinois Disaster Corps requires two classroom courses from the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA). Below are the instructions how to register for this course. Please note that the online course (IS 244.b from FEMA) is a pre-requisite to the required classroom courses and must be completed prior to attending the classroom courses. Please submit the certificate to Serve Illinois, who will ensure IEMA receives it before attending the classes.

Volunteer and Donations Management (also known as G288-Volunteers and Donations Management) (8 hours)

Volunteer Reception Center Management (also known as G489 Management of Spontaneous Volunteers in Disasters) (16 hours)

NOTE: Due to COVID-19, the course schedule will not be held as normal. Serve Illinois staff will advise the expectations of the training as changes occur

These classes are offered regularly throughout the state, but Serve Illinois works with IEMA to ensure that there is at least one offering in the Chicagoland area that is provided back to back. Information regarding the training schedule will be communicated to programs.

In order to register for the two courses, you must obtain a registration log-in for the IEMA Training Registration and Tracking Program and register for the courses there. Please do not delay in getting a user name and password as it takes time as outline below!

Step 1: To register for the program, go to

<http://public.iema.state.il.us/iema/training/OnlineReg/Register.asp>

Step 2: Follow the instructions and provide the necessary information to create your account.

Step 3: You will receive an e-mail with your login information. However, you will not receive an e-mail with the system password for up to 48 hours. Please take this amount of time into consideration when registering for the course.

Step 4: Once you have received your password, you may go here to login

<https://public.iema.state.il.us/iema/Training/OnlineReg/Login.asp>

Step 5: Once logged in, look at the lefthand side menu of options. Click on Upcoming Classes.

Step 6: Scroll down until you find the date/class of the course you want to attend. **You will have to register separately for both classes, so you will repeat this step.** Click on the far righthand

area for “register” of the line of the class you want to attend.

Step 7: There are two boxes you need to click about the cancellation policy and special assistance. Once those are reviewed, hit submit registration.

Step 8: You will receive an e-mail with registration confirmation from the system.

Step 9: Complete steps 4-8-again so that you register for both classes.

AGAIN, you need to register for two separate courses!

COURSE MATERIALS: Course materials are not provided by IEMA as their registration e-mail mentions that they will provide them ahead of time for you to either access electronically during the course or print for yourselves. In order to be sure the member receives this email, they should register for the class no later than one week prior. Serve Illinois can send the documents used most in class to program directors ahead of time to print for their members, if they wish to have them as hard copies. This will only be done upon request as the documents are large in size.

Disaster Corps Reimbursement Procedures

Serve Illinois will reimburse programs for their members' travel to the classroom trainings, as well as any potential deployments.

For the training, AmeriCorps programs can use their existing grant agreement with Serve Illinois and claim the travel on their monthly reimbursement certification form in accordance with their own travel rules.

However, if there is not funding available within the grant agreement, Serve Illinois can reimburse the program via another method upon request. Please contact staff if this is a concern.

If there is a deployment, we will work with programs at that time to determine the best course of action regarding reimbursement.

Illinois HELPS Registration

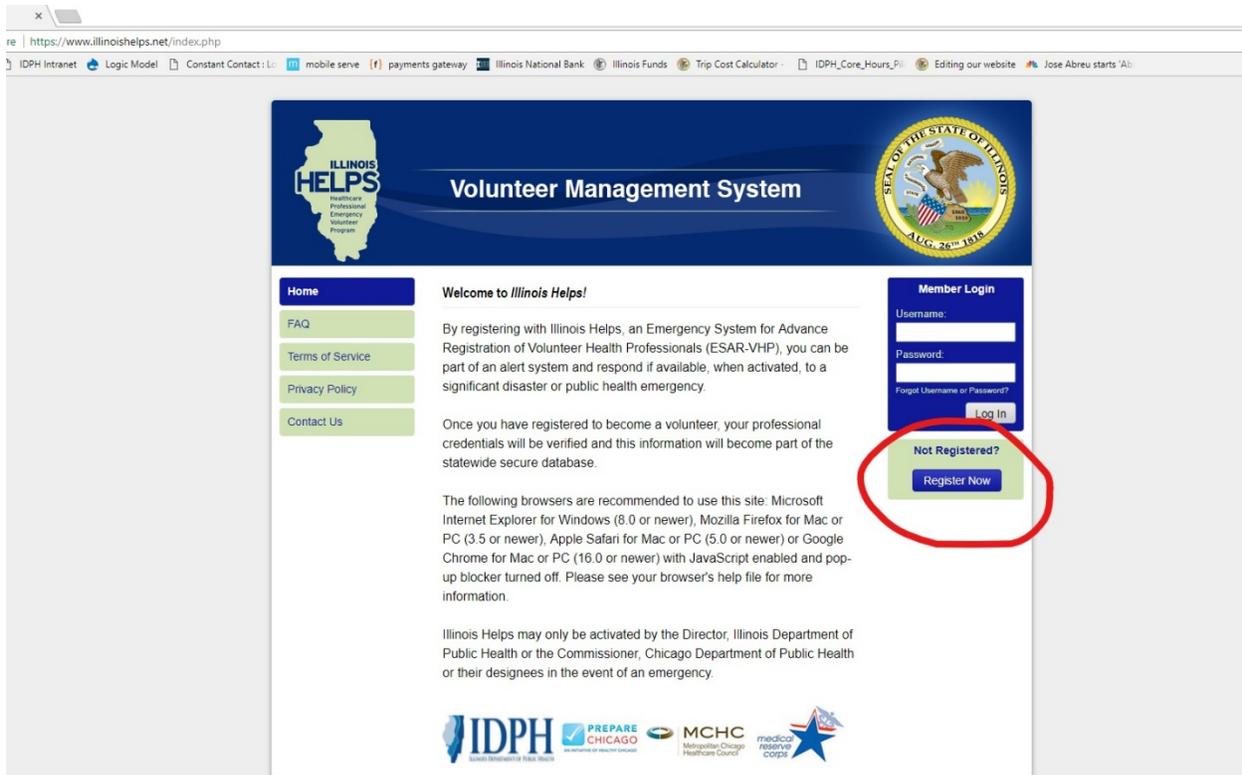
Illinois HELPS, located at <https://www.illinoishelps.net/>, is an alert system utilized by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). Each state is required to have a system that serves as the ESAR-VHP, or Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals.

Serve Illinois Commission is housed within IDPH and is able to utilize this alert system to exercise and alert Illinois Disaster Corps members. It also allows Serve Illinois to keep information about each Disaster Corps member such as contact information, licensures, credentials, training history, response experience, and skills. This automated system will allow us to both practice notifying members, as well as notify members for actual deployments. It also allows Serve Illinois the ability to get to members quicker, as they can set their own best methods of notification.

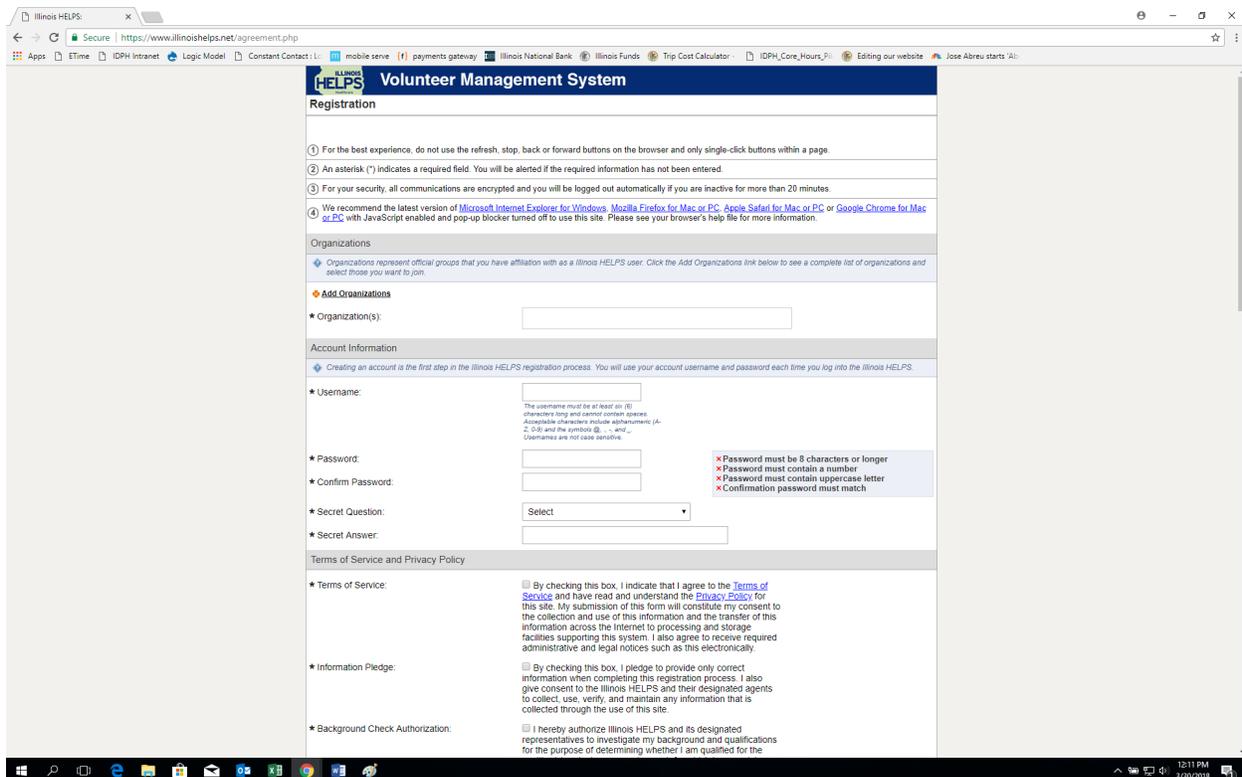
Registering is as simple as logging on to the web site and entering the information requested. Select "Register Now" button on the home page to begin the registration process. Since you are an existing member of AmeriCorps, please indicate your participation in AmeriCorps during the registration process so that your account may be associated with the program. You should have information about any applicable license and contact information available in order to complete the registration process. You may start and stop the registration process at any time. Simply log in to the system using the username and password you have created to complete any sections you have not finished.

We request that you update your information any time you have a change in status. In addition, we recommend that you check your profile and update as needed every six (6) months. Licensure information must be kept up to date or your volunteer participation may be limited. The volunteer database may contact you in the event of an emergency, so, it is important that you keep your contact information up to date in order to be contacted if needed.

Below are some screenshots of the system that may aid you in this process, as well as some more specific instructions:

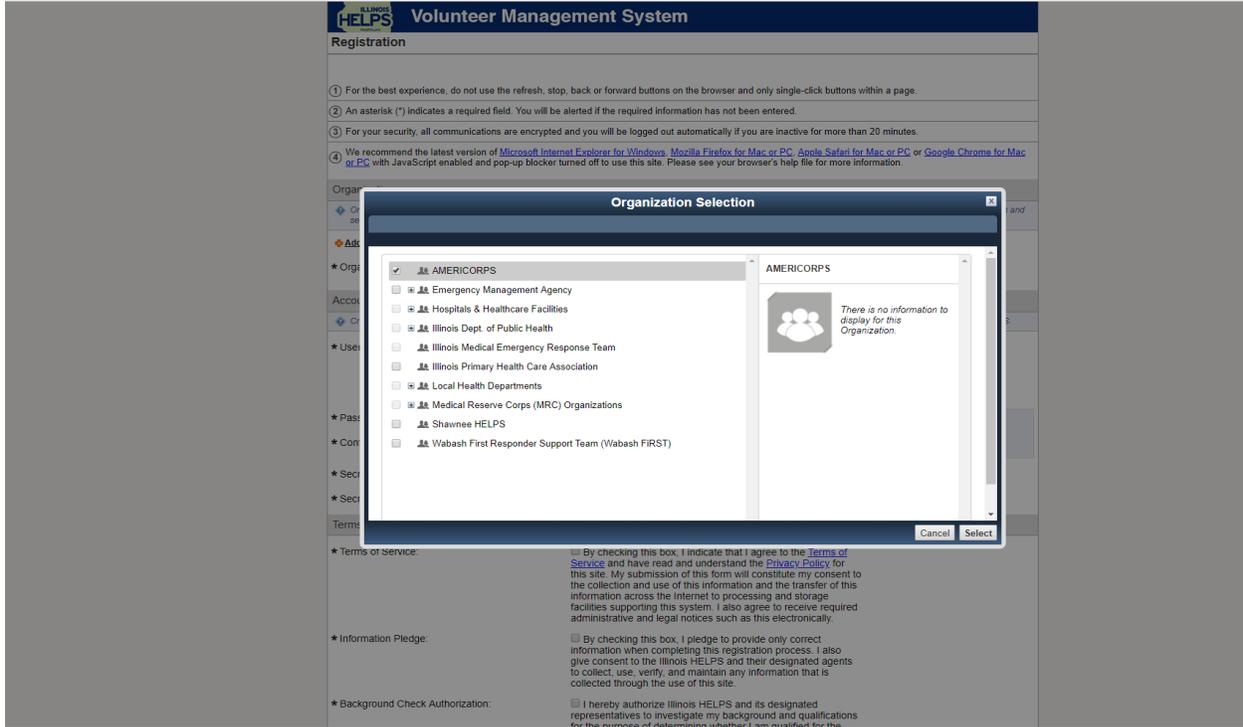


Once you click register now, it will show this page:

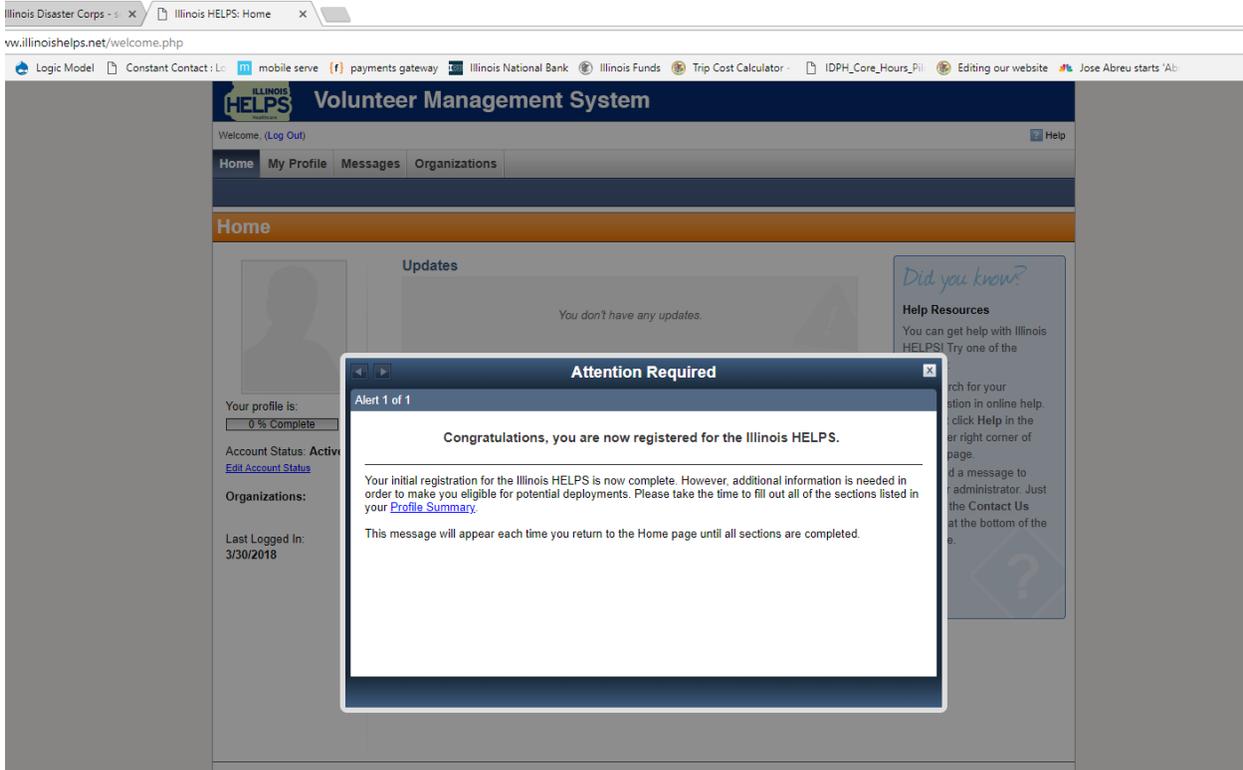


In the organizations section, click add organizations.

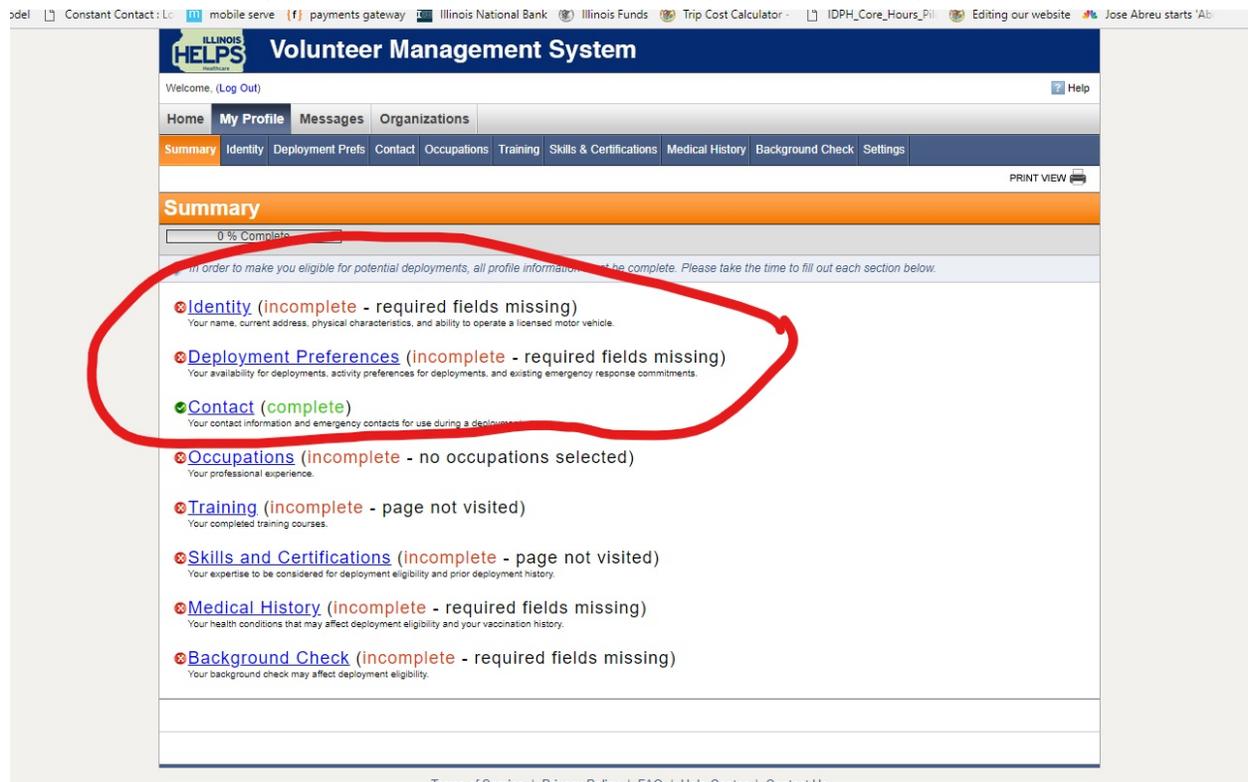
This screen below will pop up. Make sure to click AmeriCorps.



Upon registration completion, you will be accepted. Log out and then use the user name and password to log back in at the main screen. Once you log back in, you will get this:



Close this congratulations screen and then click on my profile. You only need to fill out the red circles of your profile. If you want to fill out all of them, you certainly can. It is ok that your profile will not show up to 100% completed if you do not fill them all out but you must fill these three out, plus submit a picture.



A photo needs to be submitted in the system for Serve Illinois to make badges for the program.

To Upload an Existing User Photo

1. Go to the My Profile and click **Settings** (far right)
2. Locate the *Your Photo* section and click **Choose File**. The browser file explorer opens. File must either be a GIF or JPEG and not larger than 2mb in size. Chose a photo that would be shoulders up in appearance to be used for an id badge.
3. Locate the file, select it, and click **Open**.
4. In the *Your Photo* section, click **Upload**. The photo is uploaded.

Other Program Obligations

Serve Illinois will host conference calls with Disaster Corps members to continue to touch base. These calls will be set up with advance notice and communicated via e-mail. While it is not a requirement to participate in these, it is highly suggested. Both the member and program staff are welcome to join the calls.

Illinois Disaster Corps Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Question 1: How will Illinois Disaster Corps work if activated?

Answer: Illinois Disaster Corps will be activated through the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) managed by IEMA. If a local unit of government needs state assistance with setting up a VRC or other volunteer management issues during times of an emergency, IEMA will contact the Serve Illinois Commission. Once Serve Illinois receives that call, Serve Illinois staff will activate the leadership component of Disaster Corps, which is managed by the American Red Cross. Serve Illinois and the American Red Cross will work to determine the scope of the need. If other Disaster Corps members are needed, they will be activated/contacted through the Illinois HELPS system.

Question 2: If a member is activated, how long will they be gone?

Answer: Depending on the scope of the disaster, the member could be gone up to one week or more. Serve Illinois will work with the member's host organization to ensure that both the member and organization are on the same page; however, flexibility is key. We understand that if called upon, there may be personal situations where a person cannot respond. Members are requested to make sure they are keeping their programs in the loop as in times of disaster, Serve Illinois will reach out directly to the member through Illinois HELPS.

Question 3: If a member is activated, who pays for them to be onsite?

Answer: The Serve Illinois Commission will reimburse the program for the member's time and travel from a different funding source other than the current subgrant. The program will be reimbursed, as there are generally no upfront costs that can be provided for deployment. If that becomes available, we will advise programs as such.

Question 4: When will the member receive a badge for the Illinois Disaster Corps program?

Answer: Once the final training and registration in Illinois HELPS is complete, Serve Illinois staff will likely request that a badge is made. This is used for identification purposes, and it will be requested that the member or program send a picture that can be used on the badge.

Question 5: What other time obligations are there for Illinois Disaster Corps besides the training?

Answer: It is Serve Illinois' intent to host conference calls when necessary for members just to touch base, and discuss any issues. These will be no longer than one hour.

Question 6: What other training may be a good idea but not required for members?

Answer: CPR and first aid courses could prove to be useful when onsite with lots of volunteers. There are other FEMA Independent Study (IS) courses that could help further member knowledge. Recommended ones include 100.b and 102.c.

Question 7: What other activities can members be doing while there is not a disaster?

Answer: Members and programs are welcome to reach out to their county and local emergency management officials to work with them on a regular basis. As all disasters are local, the emergency management officials work with volunteers on a regular basis, and this could be a very helpful resource for them to have locally.

Question 8: What if an AmeriCorps program would like more than one member to become trained?

Answer: Serve Illinois welcomes you to consider training other members, but it is suggested to be mindful of the potential costs of doing so.

Question 9: Do training or deployment hours under Illinois Disaster Corps count as member hours in AmeriCorps?

Answer: Yes. Training hours should be counted as training, and deployment hours should be counted as service. Travel to training is also counted as training hours, but only the travel above the member's normal commuting range.

Question 10: How long is a member certified to be in Illinois Disaster Corps?

Answer: The member can be in Illinois Disaster Corps as long as they are a member under the AmeriCorps State program.

Question 11: Can anyone else be a member of Disaster Corps?

Answer: No. For legal purposes, the member must already be an AmeriCorps member because of the contractual relationship between Serve Illinois and the AmeriCorps state program. This also means that when a member is done with their term, they are also complete with their Disaster Corps service.

Question 12: Must professional corps or education award AmeriCorps subrecipients participate in Disaster Corps?

Answer: No. If the program is a professional corps or an educational award only program, they are not required to have a member participate in the program. However, those programs are welcome to voluntarily participate. All other programs are required to participate.

Question 13: Who at the Serve Illinois Commission should be contacted about Disaster Corps?

Answer: The Serve Illinois point of contact for Disaster Corps is Michelle Hanneken, Volunteer Programs Manager. Michelle can be reached at michelle.j.hanneken@illinois.gov or by phone at (217) 524-2251.