

The UUA-UJSC Gulf Coast Volunteer Program connects volunteers with the needs of communities in the hurricane-affected areas of Louisiana. Volunteers will engage in:

- Projects with community partners from the UUA-UJSC Gulf Coast Relief Fund.
- Hands-on work with related community organizations.
- Repairing and rebuilding with Unitarian Universalist churches in the area.
- Learning about the inequalities in the rebuilding process.

The UUA-UJSC Gulf Coast program staff in New Orleans will provide for an orientation for new volunteers on the first day of their arrival which includes:

- An overall introduction to their lodging site, logistics, the situation in New Orleans, and available resources.
- Work assignments for the group.
- Safety orientation for work assignments.
- A session on understanding how issues of race and class played into the disaster and the Hurricane Katrina recovery process.

They can arrange for groups to do their own self-conducted tour of the devastated areas with a written guide.

The staff will also provide debriefing sessions with each group on the first and last days of work. They will be on site to provide assistance for volunteers on work-related issues.

Members of the staff are:

- Peggy Powell – Gulf Coast associate based in Cambridge
- Quo Vadis Breaux – Gulf Coast response coordinator, based at First Unitarian Universalist Church in New Orleans
- Candice Rivera and Nathaniel Balder, assistant volunteer coordinators also based at First Unitarian Universalist Church in New Orleans

What to bring

Personal

- Prescription and over-the-counter medicines
- Personal first aid kit
- Health insurance card
- Towels and washcloths
- Soap, shampoo, and toilet paper
- Sunscreen and insect repellent
- Pillow and sleeping bag

Work

- Work gloves
- Eye protection
- Thick-soled shoes
- Shower shoes
- Sun hats
- Suitable work clothes
- Heavy duty work shoes with thick soles
- Work hats

Code of conduct

1. Always respect each other.
2. Bring out what you bring in.

3. Keep noise levels low when people are sleeping – again, respect your roommates.
4. Clean up after yourself. Leave the area clean and sanitary for the next person.
5. Place all trash in outside receptacles when you are about to leave.
6. Do not eat other people's food without asking first.
7. No smoking inside the building.

Health precautions

Conditions along the Gulf Coast post-Katrina and Rita can present certain hazards to volunteers. We advise you to check with your physician if you have any existing health conditions before coming to work in the disaster zone.

Every volunteer must have a current tetanus shot. Some doctors recommend that you also have immunization for hepatitis A and B. Please check with your own family physician to make this choice.

See **Health and safety in the Gulf Coast**.

Weather

The Gulf Coast has a moderate climate that is almost subtropical. While winters may be mild at times, cold snaps do occur. Summers are hot and humid and last sometimes until late October. In the summer months, work hours may be restricted to early morning and evening.

Average temperatures:

January: 43-63°F

February: 46-65°F

March: 53-72°F

April: 58-78°F

May: 66-85°F

June: 72-89°F

July: 74-91°F

August: 74-91°F

September: 71-87°F

October: 60-80°F

November: 52-71°F

December: 46-65°F

Current environmental conditions

South Louisiana, www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/workers.asp or www.dhh.state.la.us .

Applications

All participants in the UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast Volunteer Program are required to fill out an **Individual Volunteer Registration Form**. Team leaders are required to fill out a **Group Volunteer Registration Form**. Team leaders will collect Individual Volunteer Registration Forms and return them together with the Group Form to UUSC.

Liability

All participants are required to fill out a **waiver of liability**.

Additional information about **New Orleans**.