

Mental Health Task Card

You have been tasked with being the mental health support person. Your job is:

1. greet newcomers to the shelter area
2. assist with the registration form
3. make an assessment regarding need for mental health support

All the survivors will feel traumatized and have needs that can only minimally be supported after a major event. Your job is to assess and offer support where it may be needed.

Please look for assistance to complete your assessment and support as needed. The buddy system is strongly recommended.

The support that you have to offer is:

1. listen to understand person's needs and concerns
2. look for a quiet place to help calm an agitated person
3. assist with meeting their immediate needs of shelter, water, medical attention, pet disposition, and food.
4. Ask the survivor if they could participate with group support as being engaged in a task is calming to some folks.
5. Circle back to check on folks

Being a support person can be emotionally exhausting. Please take a few moments to nurture yourself with time-outs to support your needs.

Addendum: Involuntary shaking of the body is common when people experience trauma and is nature's way of releasing tensions created during a traumatic event. If a trembling person is worried or frightened about the shaking, it may be helpful to let them know that shaking is normal and that it is useful to allow it to occur when in a safe environment ideally with a quietly supportive buddy present.