FEMA and American Red Cross partnership will strengthen mass care during a disaster.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the American Red Cross signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that sets the framework for the Red Cross and FEMA to jointly lead the planning and coordination of mass care services, which will strengthen and expand the resources available to help shelter, feed, provide emergency first aid and deliver supplies to survivors of a disaster.

"FEMA is only part of our nation's emergency management team," said FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate. "By partnering with the American Red Cross - another key member of this team - we will be able to coordinate mass care services more effectively and efficiently. Today's signing was an important step forward not just for FEMA and the Red Cross, but for the many Americans who may need shelter, food, first aid and other types of mass care when a disaster strikes."
"Disasters can create a wide range of emergency needs that are more than any single organization or government agency can meet, so coordination and collaboration are essential," said Gail J. McGovern, president and CEO of the American Red Cross. "The Red Cross, a volunteer organization, has decades of experience providing food, shelter, supplies and family reunification services, and we’re pleased to sign this agreement with FEMA to help disaster planning efforts across the United States."

By sharing the lead role, FEMA and the Red Cross will jointly assist states in their planning and coordinating of mass care services, specifically: sheltering, feeding, distribution of emergency supplies, and reuniting families separated by disasters. FEMA and the Red Cross will coordinate with other mass care partners to determine the most critical needs, conduct state mass care capability assessments, conduct joint training and exercises to improve and evaluate mass care capabilities, and provide mass care technical assistance to states and non-governmental organizations before, during and after a disaster.

This co-lead partnership between FEMA and the Red Cross will leverage the resourcing strengths of the federal government and the sheltering, feeding and bulk distribution expertise of the Red Cross.
FEMA will continue to serve as lead, and Red Cross as a support agency for the emergency assistance, housing and human services responsibilities within Emergency Support Function 6 of the National Response Framework.