



**National Headquarters**  
American Red Cross  
2025 E Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20006

## Statement on Impartiality of American Red Cross Disaster Services

The American Red Cross, as a member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, adheres to the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Specifically, the Principle of Impartiality states, "It makes no discrimination based upon nationality, race, religious beliefs, class, or political opinions. It endeavors to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress."

During a crisis, human beings need help to stay safe and sustain life, no matter what their nationality, cultural background or citizenship status. When an emergency happens, the Red Cross is going to deliver that help to whomever needs it, and as part of its humanitarian mission, the American Red Cross will feed, shelter, provide emotional support and other assistance without regard to race, religion, or citizenship status. The Red Cross is a charity, not a government agency and clients who have disaster-caused needs do not need to be American citizens to access Red Cross Services.

Red Cross workers will not question clients about their citizenship status, nor will they request birth certificates, immigration papers, passports, social security cards, or similar documents that could be interpreted as being used to identify the nationality or immigration status of persons seeking Red Cross assistance. Only such documents necessary to identify the individual or family as living in the disaster-affected area are required for Red Cross assistance. If federal, state or local authorities make a request to enter a shelter for the purpose of looking for undocumented shelter residents, the Red Cross will not grant them permission unless provided with a subpoena or court order. The Red Cross may disclose information about shelter residents at the behest of law enforcement if the disclosure is necessary to avert a threat or protect the health or safety of shelter occupants, another person or the community.

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September 9, 2008