



Japan YMCA

Disaster Area Safety Guidelines

Full English Translation

Safety First

All action begins with confirmed safety and responsible coordination.

Positive Net - Protecting Life Through Safety First

Original Japanese guidelines published by the Japan YMCA Area Safety Network Task, June 2019. This English version is a reference translation prepared for communication and discussion.

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Preface

In recent years, many large-scale disasters have occurred throughout Japan with a frequency not seen before. In addition, the occurrence of a Nankai Trough megathrust earthquake is predicted. As of January 2018, it was estimated that within the next 30 years there was a 70-80% probability of an earthquake of magnitude class 8-9.

These guidelines set forth a system for sharing information among neighboring YMCAs concerning stockpiled supplies and initial cooperation at the time of a disaster, beginning before a large-scale natural disaster occurs. They also provide that, after a disaster, the YMCA located in the affected area and neighboring YMCAs will jointly take the initiative and carry out support activities.

Until now, responses have been discussed between the YMCA in the affected area and the Japan YMCA Alliance, and the Alliance has assumed the secretariat function for support activities. Going forward, when a disaster occurs across a broad area, such as a Nankai Trough earthquake, responses should be faster and more suited to on-the-ground conditions. In addition, even in cases such as a Tokyo metropolitan area earthquake where the Japan YMCA Alliance may not be able to function, the premise shall be that decision-making takes place within the affected area - that is, between the YMCA in the affected area and neighboring YMCAs.

Furthermore, a principle of support that must be confirmed in advance is to clarify what the YMCA can do and what the YMCA should do. The YMCA is not an organization specialized in disaster relief. However, it has methods of group work and volunteer management cultivated over many years of camp programs. It also possesses professional expertise related to the care of children's hearts. With these strengths, it is possible to contribute to activities after a disaster and to support the rebuilding of operations at YMCAs in the affected area. In addition, facility operation commissioned by government administration has increased in areas such as care for children with special needs and social welfare, and some YMCA facilities may become designated evacuation shelters and be involved in their operation.

On the other hand, as experienced in the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, the Great East Japan Earthquake, the Kumamoto Earthquake, and the Hokkaido Eastern Iburi Earthquake, the YMCA located in the affected area may itself become a disaster-affected organization. In such cases, it is important to consider on a day-to-day basis how neighboring YMCAs can support the affected YMCA so that its staff do not become isolated and so that the YMCA can resume its operations.

Therefore, in order to raise awareness of disaster preparedness among every YMCA staff member and to be prepared to demonstrate the maximum capacity of YMCA in the event of a disaster, we propose that YMCAs create opportunities to learn, as training topics at local and national levels, about how YMCAs have worked during past disasters and about the matters that will be required in the future.

All of this is grounded in the principle of Positive Net - protecting life - Safety First, and is intended to prepare us for various disasters.

Japan YMCA Area Safety Network Task (June 2019)

Guideline Provisions

I. General Provisions

These guidelines shall serve as the policy for rescue and support activities carried out in cooperation by YMCAs nationwide and the Japan YMCA Alliance (hereinafter “the Alliance”) for disaster-affected people and communities in the event of natural disasters occurring within Japan.

II. Basic Policy

1. Rescue and support activities for disaster-affected people and communities shall be carried out by making use of the Area Safety Network established in advance, while respecting the intentions of the YMCA located in the affected area and the YMCAs within the same area.
2. With regard to policies for relief activities, such as the establishment of a local response headquarters, the YMCA located in the affected area and the YMCAs within the same area shall consult with one another and make decisions.
3. If there is no YMCA in the affected area, information shall be exchanged with cooperating organizations. A neighboring YMCA shall serve as the contact point, and the necessity and possibility of support in the affected area shall be explored. Including requests for cooperation to member YMCAs, the YMCA concerned shall determine the policy regarding support.

III. Establishment of Areas

Three areas shall be established: East Japan, Central Japan, and West Japan. Within each area, information on stockpiled supplies shall be shared. When a disaster occurs, material and human resources within the area shall be allocated in the most appropriate way, and each area shall work to provide the initial response. One Area General Secretary shall be assigned to each area.

Area	Member YMCAs and Related Organizations
East Japan Area	Hokkaido, Morioka, Sendai, Gunma, Tochigi, Ibaraki, Chiba, Saitama, Tokyo, Korean YMCA in Japan, Yokohama, Yamanashi, Atami, Student YMCAs in the area, Alliance
Central Japan Area	Toyama, Kanazawa, Nagoya, Mie, Shiga, Kyoto, Nara, Korean YMCA in Kansai, Osaka, Wakayama, Kobe, Himeji, Setouchi, Student YMCAs in the area
West Japan Area	Matsuyama, Hiroshima, Kitakyushu, Fukuoka, Nagasaki, Kumamoto, Kagoshima, Okinawa, Student YMCAs in the area

Relief Fundraising / Collaboration / Supplementary Provision

IV. Relief Fundraising

1. When nationwide fundraising is carried out based on a decision of the Area Safety Network, the Alliance shall call upon member YMCAs and Y's Men's Clubs to contribute to the “Positive Net YMCA XX Disaster-Affected Area Support Fund,” and shall coordinate the overall collection of such funds.
2. Regarding the use of the funds described above, the General Secretary of the Alliance shall make appropriate proposals and reports to the National YMCA General Secretaries' Meeting, the Domestic Cooperation Committee, and other relevant bodies, and shall obtain approval from the Board of Directors of the Alliance.
3. The Alliance shall report the amount, use, and details of activities supported by the funds collected through media such as the Alliance website.

V. Collaboration with Other Organizations

1. In disaster-affected areas, activities shall be carried out on the premise of cooperation with Y's Men's Clubs and other organizations.
2. The Area Safety Network shall build, in ordinary times, relationships with Y's Men's Clubs and other organizations that can cooperate within the network.
3. From the perspective of crisis management, the scope of responsibility of the YMCA, Y's Men's Clubs, and other organizations shall be clarified.

VI. Supplementary Provision

1. Amendments to these guidelines shall be made by resolution of the General Secretaries' Meeting.

Concept of the YMCA Area Safety Network

Establishment of Area Safety Officers

Each YMCA shall appoint one Area Safety Officer. The Area Safety Officer shall organize and share information on stockpiled supplies for their YMCA. In the event of a disaster, the Area Safety Officer shall receive instructions from the Area General Secretary and serve as the person responsible for the response.

Establishment of a YMCA Area Safety Officers' Meeting

Once a year, a meeting shall be held in which Area Safety Officers from throughout the country gather. The meeting shall confirm the meaning and outline of Area Safety. It shall also provide an opportunity for learning about disasters and response information from the previous year and for sharing, among YMCAs in the same area, information on the supplies held by each YMCA. Participants shall be the Area Safety Officers of each YMCA, the Area General Secretaries for each area, and the Area Safety Officer of the Alliance.

Promotion of Emergency Disaster Response Plans at Each YMCA

In response to an accident at an elderly care home caused by Typhoon No. 10 in 2016, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare has been requesting social welfare corporations and similar entities to formulate emergency disaster response plans. As the YMCA, regardless of juridical status, each facility shall formulate an emergency disaster response plan. The purpose of this plan is first to ensure the safety of users at each facility before beginning support for the community at the time of a disaster. The format shall be distributed by the Area Safety Task to each YMCA. After formulation, the plan shall be reviewed once a year.

Participation in Disaster Response Networks

In order to obtain various information after a disaster and to mobilize material and human resources, it is essential to maintain relationships in ordinary times with organizations that will be responsible for response after a disaster, such as councils of social welfare.

Chain of Command at the Time of Disaster

The YMCA located in the disaster-affected area shall contact the Area General Secretary for the same area. Upon receiving the contact, the Area General Secretary shall transmit information to the Area Safety Officers within the same area and issue instructions. The Alliance shall be responsible for transmitting information nationwide. Within the area established in advance, the Area General Secretary shall confirm whether material and human resources can be moved and shall begin the initial response. In parallel, if support from other areas is possible, such support shall be requested.

Affected Local YMCA	Area General Secretary	Area Safety Officers	Japan YMCA Alliance	Neighboring YMCAs
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Principles of Support

When a disaster occurs, the Area General Secretary for the relevant area shall convene the Area Safety Officers and decide the response while respecting the intentions of the affected YMCA. As the system for transmitting requests from affected area YMCA, Facebook's "YMCA Disaster Prevention Page" shall be used. The General Secretary of the YMCA located in the affected area and the Area Safety Officers shall provide support and practical operations for these instructions and commands.

Whether they are staff of the affected YMCA or staff entering to support, it is desirable to create a multi-person structure so that those involved in support activities can respond while taking rest, with consideration for the mental and physical burden associated with support activities. For details of routine response and immediately-after-disaster response, refer to the Area Safety Flowchart.

Support for the Community

- When using YMCA facilities as temporary evacuation shelters, carefully confirm safety and related matters.
- Support evacuation shelters near YMCAs and people evacuating at home.
- Implement support activities agreed upon between government administration and the YMCA, such as disaster prevention agreements and designated management facilities.
- Support children in the community.
- Participate in local disaster support meetings.
- Carry out other support activities according to community needs.

Support for the Affected YMCA

- Provide financial and human support for the resumption of operations.
- Provide supplies and coordinate logistics as necessary.

Role of the Alliance

- Share information on the activity status of other organizations at the national level.
- Provide temporary loan support when urgent funds are required.
- Support activities that assist the mental health of staff, children, and others at YMCAs in the affected area.

Japan YMCA Area Safety Conceptual Diagram

Central Japan Area	East Japan Area	West Japan Area
Area General Secretary Area Safety Officer 13 YMCAs Student YMCAs	Area General Secretary Area Safety Officer 14 YMCAs Student YMCAs	Area General Secretary Area Safety Officer 8 YMCAs Student YMCAs

The concept positions the Alliance at the center of three regional areas. Each area includes an Area General Secretary, Area Safety Officers, member YMCAs, and Student YMCAs. The areas support one another while maintaining local autonomy and rapid decision-making.

Glossary

Area Safety Guideline Formulation Task

A task established in fiscal year 2018 to review and formulate the Area Safety Guidelines.

Area General Secretary

A General Secretary responsible for one of the three areas: West Japan, Central Japan, or East Japan. In the event of a disaster, the Area General Secretary contacts the General Secretary of the YMCA located in the affected area and issues instructions to Area Safety Officers within the area.

Area Safety Officer

One person appointed by each YMCA. The Area Safety Officer organizes information on the supplies held by their YMCA and, in the event of a disaster, receives instructions from the Area General Secretary and serves as the response officer.

Area Composition

Central Japan Area	East Japan Area	West Japan Area
Area General Secretary	Area General Secretary	Area General Secretary
Area Safety Officers	Area Safety Officers	Area Safety Officers
13 YMCAs	14 YMCAs	8 YMCAs
Student YMCAs	Student YMCAs	Student YMCAs / Alliance

Area Safety Guideline Formulation Task Members

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