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NEWS RELEASE

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Governor Sends State Workers to Help with Flood Relief Efforts

Gov. Christie Whitman has authorized a task force of 30 state employees for full-time duty with the American Red Cross to help with on-going Hurricane Floyd relief efforts.

The Governor directed Personnel Commissioner Janice Mitchell Mintz to create an all-volunteer group to work with the Red Cross in flood-stricken areas around the state.

"There is no higher priority for New Jersey state government right now than to reach out those whose lives have been devastated by Hurricane Floyd," the Governor said.

The 30 relief workers will be selected from volunteers being recruited right now from state agencies. Final selection will be made by the Red Cross after a match of candidates' skills with overall relief needs.

Those picked for the Governor's task force will receive full state pay and benefits during the time they are assigned to the Red Cross for disaster-relief training and two weeks of full-time duty.

"My sincere thanks go to everyone who volunteers to go out and help fellow New Jerseyans in their time of need," Whitman added.

The Governor ordered Department of Personnel (DOP) Commissioner Janice Mitchell Mintz to administer the task force and work with senior Red Cross officials to oversee training, which is expected to begin early next week at the DOP's Training and Conference Center in Trenton.

"The state and the Red Cross are working hand in hand to assure these badly needed volunteers are trained quickly and sent into the field as soon as possible," Mintz said.

Hurricane Floyd stormed through New Jersey on Sept. 16, dumping record rains and causing some of the most destructive flooding and damage in state history. At the request of Gov. Whitman, President Clinton issued a disaster declaration for the flood-stricken areas.