

RS 29:726.4**§726.4. Statewide Cemetery Response Task Force; authority and responsibilities**

A. The Statewide Cemetery Response Task Force is hereby established to assess response and recovery needs related to cemeteries during any emergency declaration by the state or any parish thereof.

B. The task force shall be composed as follows:

(1) One representative from the Louisiana State University's Forensic Anthropology and Computer Enhancement Services (FACES) Laboratory.

(2) One representative from the Louisiana Department of Health.

(3) One representative from the Department of Justice.

(4) One representative from the Louisiana Cemetery Board.

(5) One representative from the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness.

(6) One representative appointed by the Louisiana State Coroner's Association.

C. The task force shall appoint a chairperson from among its members. Each member may appoint a designee who shall have all of the rights and privileges as a member of the task force when acting in such capacity.

D. The task force shall be activated at the request of the director of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness when the state or a parish has issued an emergency declaration and there is evidence that damage has occurred to a cemetery.

E. Upon activation, the task force shall complete and submit within seventy-two hours a preliminary assessment of the known impacts to cemeteries as a result of the emergency event to the director of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness.

F. The Statewide Cemetery Response Task Force shall have the following powers and duties:

(1) Determine whether response and recovery efforts related to cemeteries is necessary.

(2) When a response is necessary, make recommendations for the nature of the response.

(3) Provide subject matter expertise as requested during the response.

(4) May direct available parish and local resources for the response.

(5) Coordinate with any relevant federal agencies on cemetery impacts response and recovery.

(6) Coordinate with any impacted parish or local governments on the cemetery impacts response and recovery.

(7) Coordinate with any non-governmental organizations, funeral directors, monument and vault companies, churches, cemetery authorities, associations, and vendors involved in the cemetery impacts response and recovery.

(8) Advise the director of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness of any public health or other concerns related to disinterred remains for which the person responsible for disposition cannot be located.

G. Members of the task force shall be entitled to be reimbursed for actual expenses for travel consistent with allowances for state classified employees and approved by the director of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, if funding is available.

H. The task force, acting pursuant to its authority provided in this Section, may not supplant the authority of an individual cemetery authority that seeks to manage its own disaster response and communicates that desire in writing to the task force.

Acts 2018, No. 713, §1.