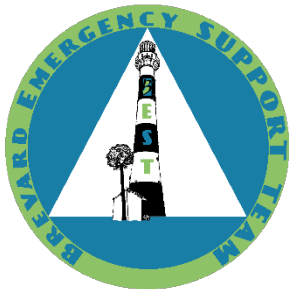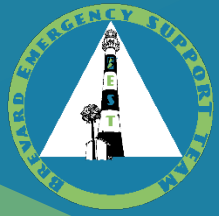# Shelter from the Storm: Lessons Learned in Brevard from Matthew to Irma

Kimberly Prosser, Director

Historic Shelter Staffing

- General Population Shelters:
  - American Red Cross, Brevard Public Schools, and Parks and Recreation
- Special Needs Shelters:
  - Department of Health, Housing and Human Services, Brevard Public Schools, and Parks and Recreation
- Pet-Friendly Shelters
  - Animal Services and Parks and Recreation
- Additional volunteers were solicited from all County Departments to provide staffing support to shelters
 - Examples: Library services

Sheltering during Hurricane Matthew

- Shelters:
  - 8 General Population Shelters
  - 4 Special Needs Shelters
  - 3 Pet-Friendly Shelters
- Experienced sizable staffing shortfalls in Pet Friendly and General Population shelters
  - Requested 200 Florida National Guard to support
- Highlighted a known gap
- Traditional staffing partners were not able to provide sufficient staffing resources
  - Loss of volunteers
 - Reduced resources and funding

Solutions Identified after Hurricane Matthew
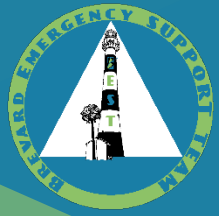
- Expand the existing County Shelter Worker Program utilized to staff Special Needs shelters where not enough County employees volunteered to fill key roles

- Activate the emergency duties clause in employee job descriptions

- Create the **Brevard Emergency Support Team (BEST) Program** to manage the issue
  - 1 year plus to develop
  - Applied the Lean Six Sigma process to systematically examine all phases of the issue and create solutions

Brevard Emergency Support Team (BEST)
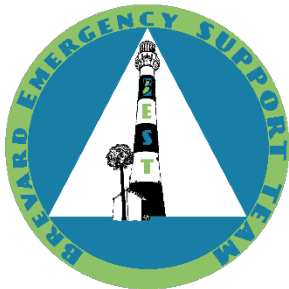
Mission

To serve those in need by helping the most vulnerable safely navigate the turbulent times of emergencies
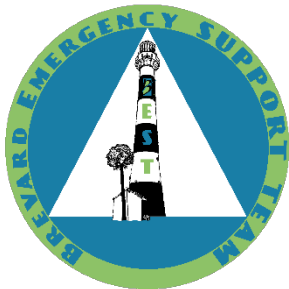
BEST Program

- Updated Emergency Preparedness Program AO to provide BEST members time to prepare homes and family prior to activation

- Created BEST AO which:
  - Requires the participation of all County departments
  - Outlines procedures and conditions for operation
  - Designates Emergency Management as the program manager
  - Formalizes the Exemption criteria and process
  - Integrates the Shelter Worker Training into the mandatory training courses for all employees
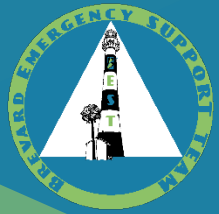
Employee Essential Status

All employees are identified as essential:

- **<u>Department Essential</u>**
  - Employees required to report to their designated work locations to ensure the operation of essential department functions

- **<u>Available Essential</u>**
  - Employees without essential department functions and available to be assigned other emergency roles

- **<u>Exempt Essential</u>**
  - Employees who have extenuating circumstances that meet the defined exemption criteria

Shelter Staffing Pay Scale

Position	General Population Shelter Worker	General Population Shelter Manager	Pet Friendly Shelter Worker	Pet Friendly Shelter Manager	Special Needs Shelter Worker	Special Needs Shelter Manager
Policy	Double Time for Pay Grade 8120 ($17.18)	Double Time for Pay Grade 8120 ($17.18) + 5% Lead Pay	Double Time for Pay Grade 8140 ($20.78)	Double Time for Pay Grade 8140 ($20.78) + 5% Lead Pay	Double Time for Pay Grade 8140 ($20.78)	Double Time for Pay Grade 8140 ($20.78) + 5% Lead Pay
Emergency Conditions Per Hour	$34.36	$36.08	$41.56	$43.64	$41.56	$43.64
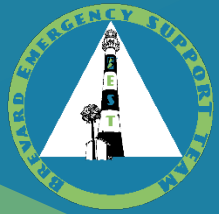
From Matthew to Irma

- Implemented BEST Program with immense leadership support
- Identified potential problematic areas and solutions through Lean Six Sigma process
- Informed all County employees of emergency duties, and trained 800 in shelter operations
- Partnered with Brevard Public Schools to increase availability of shelter staff
- Refocused the responsibilities of non-profit partners to reflect realistic capabilities
- Created host of new products to support shelter staff and operations
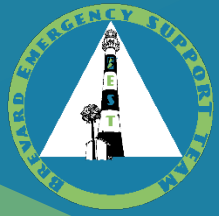
Supporting Products

- BEST Program Guide
- Shelter Worker Pocket Guide
- Shelter Training
- Shelter Administrative Kits
- Shelter Logistics Kit
- Shelter Signage and Vests
- Shelter Registration Card
- Shelter Manager Binder
- Shelter Forms
- New staffing matrix

Brevard County Emergency Management

Shelter Manager 1

Facility Liaison 1

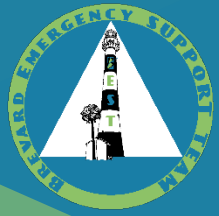**Janitorial Services** 1

Assistant Shelter Manager 1

HAM Radio Operator 1

Site Security 1

Client Support	Operations Support	Logistics Support	Wellness Support 1	Pet Support	Medical Support
Personal Assistance Services 2	Registration & Client Tracking & Misc. Admin 3	Site Setup & Parking Area Management 2	Basic First Aid	Operations Manager 1	Nursing Supervisor 1
Greeters & Shelter Orientation 1	Dormitory Management 1	Resource Support & Inventory Management 1	Client Mental Health	Registration & Assessment 2	Registration & Triage 9
Client Volunteer Recruiter & Coordinator 1	Feeding 3	Environmental Health & Safety 1	Staff Mental Health	Behavioral Specialist 2	Client Care, Monitoring & Support 10
				Veterinarian Technician 1	Nursing Logistics 1

Shelter Staffing [per 12hr shift]
Foundation Staffing (22)
Pet Friendly (+6)
Total Pet Friendly Shelter Staffing (28)
Special Needs Shelter (+21)
Total Special Needs Shelter Staffing (43)

Sheltering during Hurricane Irma

- Shelters:
  - 12 General Population Shelters **(+4 from Matthew)**
  - 5 Special Needs Shelters **(+1 from Matthew)**
  - 4 Pet-Friendly Shelters **(+1 from Matthew)**
- Shelters sufficiently staffed by BEST members
  - National Guard was not needed this time
- More effective use of resources
- Clearer understanding of roles by partners
- Positive reception by residents and visitors, thankful for efforts of BEST members
- Positive reception by employees, thankful for opportunity to give back to community
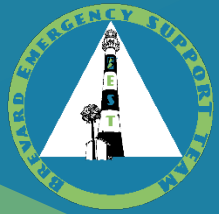
BEST Takeaways

- Importance of recognition by community and coworkers
  - "BEST All-Stars" are showcased to recognize those who went above and beyond
- Face-to-face after action meetings, coupled with an online survey, fosters staff ownership
- Transparency in improvement process encourages participation and comfort
- Automating key program processes will increase overall efficiency and effectiveness
- Shelters are a life boat, not a cruise ship; public's expectations will not match reality