



Camden & Gloucester County MRC

2011

This handbook provides the MRC member with general guidance, expectations, code of conduct, deployment information and fact sheets to support their mission as a community volunteer.

Medical Reserve Corps

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Medical Reserve Corps

Historically, medical personnel and citizens spontaneously volunteer following emergencies or disasters. Spontaneous volunteers are often unfamiliar with local emergency response systems and may not be as effective in the provision of emergency medical services as members of organized response groups. The Medical Reserve Corps (<http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov>) provides an opportunity for local health care professionals and others to strengthen communities by being pre-identified and prepared to respond as a volunteer following a large-scale emergency.

Mission:

The mission of the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) is to develop a prepared, trained workforce of volunteers to serve the citizens of New Jersey in the event of a public health emergency.

Eligibility to Volunteer:

To volunteer with the MRC you must be one of the following:

- Active, inactive or retired health care professionals in good standing
- Public health professionals
- Students of a health profession
- Community members without medical training can assist with administrative and other essential support functions

In addition, applicants are required to be in good health, at least 18 years of age and a citizen of the United States. Volunteers should possess a valid driver's license with access to an insured vehicle or have access to transportation.

Potential Duties:

During an **emergency:**

- Augment medical and support staff shortages at medical or emergency facilities
- Assist with the distribution or dispensing of pharmaceuticals
- Assist with surveillance and notification
- Assist staging area staff, both medical and non-medical
- Assist with immunization clinics, education, infectious disease outbreak support, and other duties
- Assist with phone bank operations or call centers during public health events

During times of **non-emergency: (Optional)**

- Support the US Surgeon General Priorities (<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov>)
- Staff first aid areas at community events
- Provide educational presentations on special health topics
- Distribute preparedness information
- Promote immunization and other public health campaigns



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Expectations of MRC Volunteers:

- If applicable, maintain professional licensure and/or certification.
- Maintain current CPR/First Aid certification
- Complete required core curriculum courses.
- Establish and maintain account with the NJ Learning Management Network
 - <https://njlmn.rutgers.edu/>
- Maintain contact, emergency, and licensure information in your NJMRC profile
 - <https://njmrc.nj.gov>
- Participate in local disaster training exercises and drills.
- Report availability in a timely manner (ideally, within 2 hours) following notification of MRC activation. Notification exercises are conducted annually.
- Report injuries or illnesses that occur during a deployment or exercise immediately.
- Accept the chain of command regardless of position.
- Maintain a high standard of moral and ethical conduct. The following behaviors are not acceptable and are grounds for dismissal:
 - Consumption of alcoholic beverages while on duty or any display of public drunkenness
 - Possession, use, or selling of any illegal drugs or substances
 - Misuse or selling of any prescription drugs
 - Violation of any local, state, or Federal law
 - Public outbursts, derogatory remarks, or profane language
 - Physical violence or intimidation of others
 - Possession of a firearm
 - Sexual harassment
 - Theft of property or misuse of equipment and supplies
 - Gross negligence, inattention to duty, carelessness, insubordination, refusal to follow orders or directives, dishonesty, or willful misconduct in the performance of one's duties
 - Entering into unauthorized contracts for goods or services in the name of the MRC or any agency
 - Adherence to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap
 - Adherence to all laws protecting the privacy of personal information
 - Access to cache and requests for supplies shall be granted only through the MRC chain of command. Volunteers must return all procured equipment prior to demobilization.
 - Discussions with any media source during activation are prohibited, unless previously authorized by the team leader or coordinator.



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Insurance and Liability:

New Jersey law provides that volunteers acting in good faith carrying out, complying with or attempting to comply with, any order, rule or regulation promulgated pursuant to a declared emergency, or performing any authorized service in connection therewith, shall not be liable for any injury or death to persons or damage to property as a result of any such activity.

Healthcare professionals are strongly encouraged to maintain their own malpractice insurance.

During a declared public health emergency liability is extended to volunteers in good standing through the NJ Emergency Health Powers Act.

http://www.state.nj.us/health/flu/documents/plan/comm_app_5.pdf

Other federal or state acts/laws may also impact the status of an MRC volunteer. For example during the H1N1 pandemic of 2009 federal law makers passed the Public Readiness and Emergency (PREP) Act which provided immunity from tort liability to vaccine manufacturers, distributors, administrators and planners of the H1N1 pandemic.

Identification:

When reporting to an event or an exercise photo identification is required. In addition to your personal photo identification, MRC coordinators will arrange for badges to be issued to each volunteer.

Training:

NJ has established a core curriculum for MRC volunteers. The list of courses in the core curriculum can be found in the attachment “MRC Training Record”. Use this guide as an educational journal to document completed courses. Periodically share the dates of the courses with your MRC coordinator to ensure records are up to date. Courses are offered online or at our quarterly meetings. Refer to the attachment “Recommended Introduction Courses Medical Reserve Corps” for additional training opportunities.

Training exercises simulating public health emergencies will also offer the opportunity to test the capabilities of MRC volunteers. Additional training may be necessary as roles are defined within health district and/or other emergency plans.

Deployment:

The specific circumstances and conditions of a deployment will vary but the following guidelines should prepare you for a local/regional deployment.

- Inform your family and employer that you have been requested to deploy. Ensure you have obtained sufficient leave time to cover estimated deployment time. Shifts are planned for 8 - 12 hours and will be specified in your deployment request.
- Pack your go-bag with essential items including, photo identification, MRC training tools, MRC hat, notebook, water, pens, sun screen, sweatshirt/jacket, flashlight, hand sanitizer, specialized food needs, hand sanitizer.



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- Remember to wear comfortable clothes and shoes
- Obtain pertinent deployment information including:
 - Report time
 - Location
 - Designated area or coordinator to report to
 - Length of shift
- Always follow Incident Command Structure (ICS) training.
- Be Safe! Understand the environment in which you will be asked to work and identify potential safety hazards.
- After you check in, identify your immediate supervisor and report to them directly.
- When your shift is complete always check out. Report any issues and total service time with your MRC coordinator.

Attachments in this handbook:

- MRC Training Record
- Recommended Introduction Courses Medical Reserve Corps
- NJLMN FAQ
- Volunteer Safety Tips
- Sample POD setup
- ESAR-VHP FAQ