



West Central Ohio  
Medical Reserve Corps

**Member Handbook**

**First Edition**

**January 2009**

**Serving**

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Electronic version available at [www.WestCentralOhioMRC.org](http://www.WestCentralOhioMRC.org).

# Preface

In the wake of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, thousands of Americans responded by volunteering their talents and skills to help others. Many more Americans asked, “What can I do to help?”

During his 2002 State of the Union address, President George W. Bush called on all Americans to make a lifetime commitment of at least 4,000 hours – the equivalent of two years of their lives – to serve their communities, the nation and the world. President Bush created the USA Freedom Corps to help Americans answer his call to service and to foster a culture of service, citizenship and responsibility.

Citizen Corps is the component of USA Freedom Corps that creates local opportunities for individuals to volunteer to help their communities prepare for and respond to emergencies by bringing together local leaders, citizen volunteers and the network of first responder organizations, such as fire departments, police departments and emergency medical personnel.

The Medical Reserve Corps is the component of the Citizen Corps that will bring together local health professionals and others with relevant health-related skills to volunteer in their community. These volunteers will assist local, existing community emergency medical response systems as well as provide a group of readily trained and available resources to help a community deal with pressing public health needs and improvements. Citizen Corps Councils and Medical Reserve Corps units will vary from community to community, depending on each community’s needs and the decisions made by the community’s leadership and its citizens. The initiatives in all communities share the common goal of engaging volunteers in helping their communities prevent, prepare for and respond to crime, disasters, pressing public health needs and emergencies of all kinds.

# **West Central Ohio Medical Reserve Corps Mission Statement**

The mission of the West Central Ohio Medical Reserve Corps is to provide medical and non-medical volunteers who can support in the effort to improve the health, safety, and welfare of the community in which they live.

## **Structure of the Medical Reserve Corps**

Each County MRC is organized under their local Health District and in collaboration with their County Emergency Management Agency and the Ohio Citizen Corps Council. The Citizen Corps Council is a component of USA Freedom Corps established by President George W. Bush in 2002. National Medical Reserve Corps office is located at the Office of the United States Surgeon General.

Administration for the program is provided by the Coordinator. When the County MRC is mobilized (for an exercise or an actual event), command and control is provided through the County EMA or local municipality designate, and other agencies, depending on the nature of the event.

# Membership Requirements

MRC members must be at least 18 years of age. United States citizenship is not required, however, proof of valid residence must be presented upon completion of the MRC Application. Members are required to maintain a valid Ohio Driver's license (or valid Ohio photo I.D.) and remain free of felony and serious misdemeanor convictions.

MRC members ***who are not working in the medical field*** are required to provide references for the MRC's assistance during evaluation. Assignments will be based on range of experience, desired types of assignments, and actual open assignments in the event of deployment.

MRC members ***who are working as medical care personnel*** are required to hold a current license and/or certification to provide medical care and must work within the scope of their licensure. Assignments within the MRC will be made according to a member's current level of licensure/certification and experience. If licensed upon admission to the MRC, members are required, as a minimum, to maintain the level of licensure/certification that qualified them to join the MRC or notify the Coordinator of status change. MRC members are required to provide proof of re-licensure/recertification when credentials expire. The MRC will not pay for re-licensure or recertification fees, although exceptions may be made when certifications are obtained as part of a MRC training course

Members are required to sign a "Code of Conduct" (See Code of Conduct – Page 6) and must abide by it during their service in the MRC.

The MRC's Policies and Procedures (see Policies and Procedures, Appendix C) are endorsed by the Citizen Corps Council and members are required to understand and adhere to those policies and procedures whenever they are mobilized for an exercise or an actual event.

The MRC does not discriminate with regard to race, gender, ethnicity, or physical capability. MRC members may, however, be assigned responsibilities that are appropriate given their race, gender, ethnicity, or physical capabilities (for example, a male may be assigned to care for male patients and a Spanish-speaking member may be assigned to assist Spanish-speaking persons).

Members are required, within reason, to participate in meetings, exercises and actual mobilizations. Members who miss an inordinate number of meetings, exercises or events may be dismissed from the MRC or placed at a lower response level. A yearly refresher course may be required.

# Code of Conduct and Confidentiality

**Code of Conduct:** The purpose of this code is to establish standards of conduct for all volunteers by identifying those acts or actions that are compatible with the best interest of the individuals served by this agency. Failure to comply with these standards could result in your dismissal from the MRC.

- I will treat all individuals served by this agency with the same care and compassion.
- I will not accept either directly or indirectly, any gift, gratuity, or anything of value from clients served by this agency.
- I will not discuss controversial topics such as, religious beliefs, political views, nor offer medical advice outside of my role.
- I will not report for duty while under the influence of an intoxicant or controlled substance, nor will I consume any such substance during working hours.
- I shall be neat and clean, and dress in a manor appropriate to the nature of my assignment.
- I understand that smoking is not permitted in buildings, or on the grounds of buildings operated by this agency.
- I understand that this agency will not provide a locked spot for valuables, such as purses, and is not responsible for loss or theft of personal items.
- I understand that it is against the policy of this agency, and illegal under state and federal law for any volunteer, male or female, to sexually harass another volunteer.
- Accurately recording time worked is the responsibility of every volunteer. I agree to sign in and sign out for every volunteer shift.
- I will exercise care and follow all operating instructions, safety standards, and guidelines when using equipment, machines, tools, etc, that belong to this agency or belong to the facility being used by this agency. If any equipment, machines, tools or medical supplies appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair, I will notify the supervisor immediately.

## **Confidentiality Statement:**

In the course of volunteering with this agency, I recognize that it is my responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of all information that identifies a client, or discloses any information about the client; and to comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) standards.

I agree that I will not share any information I may obtain in verbal or written form. I also agree that I will not share any client information even if the information is available through other means. I further acknowledge that the confidentiality policy applies after termination as a volunteer with this agency.

# MRC Meetings and Trainings

The Medical Reserve Corps has several training opportunities. The Ohio Medical Reserve Corps has recommended and optional courses. Membership meetings will be held at the Coordinators discretion. Check with your Coordinator to see what is available in your area.

## Trainings

### Recommended Trainings:

1. Introduction to Medical Reserve Corps – learn basic function and mission of the MRC. After completion of the course and proof of licensure, members will be issued an MRC ID badge.
2. Communicable Diseases – learn about common diseases that are easily spread.
3. Family Readiness – learn how to prepare your family for a disaster.
4. Psychological First Aid – learn how to deal with the emotional aspects of a disaster. In-class or on-line
5. Incident Command Structure/National Incident Management System (ICS/NIMS) 100 and 700 – learn command structure to be used in a disaster. In-class or on-line ([www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov))

### Other learning opportunities:

6. Volunteer Reception Center Training – learn how volunteers will be mobilized during a disaster
7. Points of Dispensing (POD) Training – learn how medications or vaccinations will be given to a large number of people at once
8. Basic Disaster Life Support/Advanced Disaster Life Support (BDLS/ADLS) – medical personnel can learn the altered standard of care during a disaster. Cost associated with course.
9. Needs of Children in Disasters – learn how to address the special needs of children during a disaster. Cost associated with course
10. Pandemic Influenza Training – learn how, when, where to respond in a pandemic
11. CPR/First Aid – learn how to administer basic first aid and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation
12. Blood Borne Pathogens – learn the risk of exposure and how to use personal protective equipment

Additional trainings vary per county.

Members may attend trainings in surrounding counties.

# MRC Member Standards

Members must be appropriately trained and licensed or certified for the duties to which they will be assigned as part of the MRC. The Coordinator will maintain files on each member and is responsible for periodic audits to ensure licenses and certifications remain current.

The Coordinator may encourage members to be vaccinated against Hepatitis B and have had a Tetanus booster within the last 10 years. Documentation of waiver for vaccination may be needed. Members should have a current (within 12 months) negative TB test or documentation of a past positive and treatment regimen. Follow up will be on a case by case basis.

## **Family Readiness**

In order to respond to an event, you and your family must be prepared for a disaster. This includes having a family communication plan, evacuation plan, food, and water. Trainings will be provided to give you ideas of things you can do. American Red Cross and Ohio Department of Health are wonderful resources to develop what works best for your situation.

## Legal and Liability Issues

**Ohio Revised Code 121.404** offers coverage for volunteers who have registered with [www.serveohio.org](http://www.serveohio.org) or by calling 1-888-76-OHIO. Members must register to have liability coverage. This protection also covers Just-in-Time (JIT) Spontaneous volunteers, as long as there is a written registration form for that volunteer.

(Refer to Appendix A)

# Procedures for Deployment and Deactivation

In the event of a public health or medical emergency, MRC members will likely be activated through a five phase system. The phases of MRC Activation are as follows:

- Phase 1: Alert
- Phase 2: Activate
- Phase 3: Operations
- Phase 4: Deactivation
- Phase 5: Debrief

## **Phase 1:** MRC Alert Notification

During this phase, if time allows, the MRC Coordinator will alert the MRC members about the status of a disaster situation, most likely by e-mail, phone, or mass media. This will give the volunteer a sense of what has occurred and the likelihood of their future involvement in the response. If an emergency develops quickly, Phase 1 may be skipped and phase 2 initiated first. Notification via media release to respond to the Volunteer Reception Center (VRC).

## **Phase 2:** Activation

Waiting for the activation call ensures that they receive the appropriate information about where to report and receive event-specific training. When volunteers come to the Volunteer Reception Center you will receive information about the situation, help that is requested and appropriate gear to have. MRC badge needs to be displayed.

## **Phase 3:** Operations

This is the phase of actual volunteer service for those volunteers able to respond to the disaster.

- Will usually be a 8 hour shift
- Security will be provided
- Wear comfortable, non-offensive clothing, long pants, and closed toe shoes
- Backpack or small bag with personal items (e.g. medications, glasses)
- Do not bring valuables
- Volunteers for the MRC may not bring weapons to any event

Just-In-Time training will be offered during the operations phase. This will ensure specific procedures are followed and will take place at the job assignment location. Background information on the event or situation will be provided to ensure safety.

Procedures will vary for different types of emergencies, so pre-event training for all volunteers is not practical. Just-In-Time training ensures that specific procedures are fresh in the mind. All MRC volunteers are provided with Just-In-Time training at a centralized location or at the Point of Dispensing (POD) site before assisting in an event. This Just-In Time training serves as an orientation. Training should give the appropriate background needed in order to safely and effectively participate in a response. All emergency response in Miami County operates from a centralized command system. For the purposes of volunteer service, each volunteer reports to only one supervisor. All POD volunteers should receive preventative medicine or vaccine if needed (Appendix B – Just-In-Time Training).

**Phase 4: Demobilization**

When a volunteer is mobilized the plan for demobilization begins. When a volunteer is no longer needed there is a plan for sending that person home. During a disaster, if volunteer availability permits, those in the MRC may be asked to serve for more than one shift. Deactivation occurs after the last MRC volunteer shift has ended. It is important that you officially check out after your shift.

**Phase 5: Debrief**

This phase occurs after the disaster is over. MRC leadership will be gathering feedback and information from all volunteers who respond to the event to collect their thoughts on the MRC process, as well as to evaluate what worked and didn't work about the response effort.

Remember your decision to participate in response efforts is voluntary. MRC volunteers are provided with the appropriate training before a response, they are never asked to perform duties they are not licensed or that they feel uncomfortable doing. When you get a request for assistance, evaluate whether you are in a position to help. If you feel that you are able to help, notify your family of your intentions.

# Appendix A-Legal and Liability Issues

**Ohio Revised Code 121.404** offers coverage for volunteers who have registered with [www.serveohio.org](http://www.serveohio.org) or by calling 1-888-76-OHIO. Members must register to have liability coverage. This protection also covers Just-in-Time (JIT) Spontaneous volunteers, as long as there is a written registration form for that volunteer.

## **121.404 Council cooperation in establishing system for emergency volunteers.**

(A) The Ohio community service council shall advise, assist, consult with, and cooperate with agencies and political subdivisions of this state to establish a statewide system for recruiting, registering, training, and deploying the types of volunteers the council considers advisable and reasonably necessary to respond to an emergency declared by the state or political subdivision.

(B) A registered volunteer is not liable in damages to any person or government entity in tort or other civil action, including an action upon a medical, dental, chiropractic, optometric, or other health-related claim or veterinary claim, for injury, death, or loss to person or property that may arise from an act or omission of that volunteer. This division applies to a registered volunteer while providing services within the scope of the volunteer's responsibilities during an emergency declared by the state or political subdivision or in disaster-related exercises, testing, or other training activities, if the volunteer's act or omission does not constitute willful or wanton misconduct.

(C) The Ohio community service council shall adopt rules pursuant to Chapter 119. of the Revised Code to establish fees, procedures, standards, and requirements the council considers necessary to carry out the purposes of this section.

(D) (1) A registered volunteer's status as a volunteer, and any information presented in summary, statistical, or aggregate form that does not identify an individual, is a public record pursuant to section 149.43 of the Revised Code

(2) Information related to a registered volunteer's specific and unique responsibilities, assignments, or deployment plans, including but not limited to

training, preparedness, readiness, or organizational assignment, is a security record for purposes of section 149.433 of the Revised Code.

(3) Information related to a registered volunteer's personal information, including but not limited to contact information, medical information, or information related to family members or dependents, is not a public record pursuant to section 149.43 of the Revised Code.

(E) As used in this section and section 121.40 of the Revised Code:

(1) "Registered volunteer" means any individual registered as a volunteer pursuant to procedures established under this section and who serves without pay or other consideration, other than the reasonable reimbursement or allowance for expenses actually incurred or the provision of incidental benefits related to the volunteer's service, such as meals, lodging, and childcare.

(2) "Political subdivision" means a county, township, or municipal corporation in this state.

Effective Date: 04-14-2006

Section 2305.23 (Liability for emergency care) and 5923.27 (Privileges and immunities while on state active duty) of Ohio Revised Code deal with Good Samaritan Laws.

## Appendix B – Just-In-Time Training

- 1) MRC specific information
  - a. mobilization and demobilization
  - b. MRC go kit
  - c. Credentialing
  - d. volunteer support
- 2) Refresher overview
  - a. Agent specific information refresher
  - b. Infectious disease control refresher
  - c. Blast injury refresher
  - d. Secure site
  - e. Environmental hazard refresher
- 3) Site specific safety concerns
  - a. site hazards
  - b. first aid
  - c. emergency exists
  - d. escape routes
  - e. shelter in place
  - f. security
  - g. secondary meeting site
- 4) Where to report; which site to go to
- 5) Overall operations process
- 6) Communications
- 7) Logistics at the site
  - a. Supplies you should bring
  - b. Supplies available at the site
  - c. time tracking
- 8) Check in and check out procedures
- 9) Criminal-epidemiology investigation
- 10) General medical
  - a. (hygiene
  - b. IV
  - c. first aid
  - d. Medical waste & disposal at the site
- 11) ICS refresher.
- 12) List of organizational chart: Who answers to whom?
- 13) Scope of duties; Job action sheet overview; Job types available and assignments; Job action sheets.

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- I will treat all individuals served by this agency with the same care and compassion.
- I will not accept either directly or indirectly, any gift, gratuity, or anything of value from clients served by this agency.
- I will not discuss controversial topics such as, religious beliefs, political views, nor offer medical advice outside of my role.
- I will not report for duty while under the influence of an intoxicant or controlled substance, nor will I consume any such substance during working hours.
- I shall be neat and clean, and dress in a manor appropriate to the nature of my assignment.
- I understand that smoking is not permitted in buildings, or on the grounds of buildings operated by this agency.
- I understand that this agency will not provide a locked spot for valuables, such as purses, and is not responsible for loss or theft of personal items.
- I understand that it is against the policy of this agency, and illegal under state and federal law for any volunteer, male or female, to sexually harass another volunteer.
- Accurately recording time worked is the responsibility of every volunteer. I agree to sign in and sign out for every volunteer shift.
- I will exercise care and follow all operating instructions, safety standards, and guidelines when using equipment, machines, tools, etc, that belong to this agency or belong to the facility being used by this agency. If any equipment, machines, tools or medical supplies appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair, I will notify the supervisor immediately.

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I agree that I will not share any information I may obtain in verbal or written form. I also agree that I will not share any client information even if the information is available through other means. I further acknowledge that the confidentiality policy applies after termination as a volunteer with this agency.

I, (Print your name)\_\_\_\_\_ have read this document, and agree to provide volunteer services in accordance with these standards.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**PERSONAL STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I am  an applicant for  a member of the \_\_\_\_\_ County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). I understand there are certain conditions I must accept as a member of the MRC.

**1. Availability**

I am capable of and willing to serve on disaster assignments for as long as the need arises. The length of the assignment will vary depending on the type of disaster. I understand that I could be asked to serve long hours and some events could last for several days so multiple assignments might be requested.

I am capable of and willing to serve on disaster assignments **to the best of my ability**. I understand the length of an assignment will vary depending on the type of disaster. I may be asked to serve long hours and some events could last for several days, meaning multiple assignments might be requested.

**2. Work Performance**

I am willing to comply with directives issued by the Medical Reserve Corps. I will uphold and follow the policies outlined in the member handbook and the organizations that support the MRC. I understand that I may be released from an assignment and/or removed from the Medical Reserve Corps for a violation of policy or a personnel/performance issue.

**3. Insurance Coverage**

It is strongly suggested that MRC members ensure they have adequate health insurance to protect themselves against financial loss should an accident or injury require medical care or result in loss of wages.

**4. Status**

I understand that I must attend a refresher class and submit an updated form every three years.

I verify that within the last year I have not been convicted of a felony or of a misdemeanor resulting in imprisonment.

I fully understand the mandatory requirements indicated above and certify that I am able to comply with them. If these statements are found to be incomplete or untrue, I understand that I will be removed from the MRC.

By signing this statement I confirm that I have received the member handbook and agree to abide by the contents therein.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_