

DAVIS
COUNTY
medical
reserve
corps



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Welcome

On behalf of the Davis County Health Department, thank you for joining the Davis County Medical Reserve Corps (DCMRC). It is volunteers like you who make our community strong and resilient so we are better prepared to respond after a disaster or local emergency.

DCMRC currently has almost 300 volunteers who come from various medical and non-medical backgrounds. DCMRC's primary roles are to supplement the Public Health System and/or EMS System including local hospitals if a medical surge becomes necessary during an emergency response. This may include, but is not limited to; dispensing medications or staffing a call center during a pandemic; working in a shelter or alternate care site; or working in a Family Assistance Center with victims' families.

In the future, DCMRC's roles may expand and/or change as new partnerships are formed with other agencies in the county. In addition, as the needs of our community are better identified, DCMRC will be prepared to step in to do what is needed to support our county during a disaster or emergency response.

Again, thank you for your commitment to our community and for your willingness to help when it is most needed. It is good to know that when our local response agencies and systems are at capacity, we have MRC members who are ready and willing to step in and help. Hopefully you will find that being an DCMRC member is as beneficial to you as you are to our community.

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New Members

Registration

To register as a volunteer;

1. Go to www.utahresponds.org.
2. Create a user profile.
3. Complete all profile sections including; Identity, Deployment Preferences, Contact, Occupations, Training, Skills and Certification and Background Check.
4. Regularly update your profile with new addresses, phone numbers, occupational changes and any other relevant life changes.



Required Training

New members are required to complete the following online FEMA training within three months of registration;

- IS 100 Introduction to Incident Command System
- IS 200 ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents

These can be accessed at <https://training.fema.gov/is/nims.aspx>. Each training can take up to three hours to complete online and can be done in one sitting or intermittently. Upon completion of this training, simply email your completion certificate to the Unit Coordinator.

In addition, new members who do not already have **Basic First Aid** and **CPR** training are required to take it either on their own or by attending the class when it is offered by Davis County MRC (DCMRC). This class is offered twice a year and should be completed within 12 months of registration. Information for classes is included in quarterly newsletters.

For members who already have this training, they will need to include this information in their Utah Responds profile for tracking purposes. Please keep in mind that CPR training has to be renewed every two years.

Orientation

When a new member registers in Utah Responds, the Unit Coordinator sends out a welcome email to the volunteer that includes a digital copy of the Member Handbook, instructions for required training and the next available date for a “Coordinator Meet and Greet” so they can meet their Unit Coordinator.

Prior to attending the meet and greet, the volunteer should read the Member Handbook and complete all required FEMA training. This will prepare them to ask any additional questions they may have about being a volunteer for DCMRC.

Background of Medical Reserve Corps

In his January 2002 State of the Union address, President Bush asked all Americans to offer meaningful volunteer service in their communities, in whatever ways they could.

Many medical and health volunteers offered their skills in response to the September 11, 2001, attacks. These attacks underscored the need for a more organized approach to using medical and health volunteers during an emergency.

Medical and health volunteers can provide highly technical skills and services. As volunteers, they often must coordinate their efforts with complex medical emergency and public health response systems. To protect emergency responders' safety, it is critical to prepare volunteers prior to an emergency response effort.

To support this effort, Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy G. Thompson officially launched the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) in July 2002. Congress allocated funds to establish the MRC Program Office in the U.S. Surgeon General's Office to initiate an MRC demonstration project and to provide national technical assistance.

Since the MRC initiative began in 2002, units have been formed in nearly every state, and thousands of individuals have signed up or have expressed interest in volunteering. Local communities also have worked diligently and creatively to establish the foundation of community support and planning necessary for their units to function effectively.

As a result, this national movement adds unique capabilities and increased strength to communities nationwide. The MRC network comprises 996 community-based units and over 200,000 volunteers located throughout the United States and its territories.

Update

In 2013, Congress passed the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Reauthorization Act (PAHPRA), which continued the authorization for the MRC, but moved authority and responsibility of the program to the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR). A *Memorandum of Understanding* allows for continuation of operations within the Office of the Surgeon General and strategic oversight by ASPR. This shift was completed in the Fall of 2014.



MRC in Utah

In Utah, there are 12 MRC units totaling over 1,800 volunteers statewide. As required by state law, these units fall under the responsibility of local health departments* across the state. The map below shows these units by health district;



Each unit works independently of one another, however; a *Memorandum of Understanding* allows units to work together, if needed. This means, Davis County MRC volunteers may be requested to assist in another county when Davis County has not been affected and vice versa. This ensures that local help is always readily available within our state.

*The only exception to this rule is San Juan County. Since it became its own health district in 2015, their MRC still resides under the direction of the Southeast Public Health Department.

Volunteer Responsibilities

Non-Emergency Times

During non-emergency times, DCMRC volunteers' responsibilities are to complete all required training; to keep their Utah Responds profile updated; and to participate in activation drills in observance of the Great Utah Shakeout in April and National Preparedness Month in September.

There are also optional trainings offered throughout the year that volunteers are encouraged to attend when able. These trainings build on skills that will be necessary if activated and will help put volunteers to work faster in a disaster or emergency response. In the near future, DCMRC will also be forming teams of specially trained volunteers who can be activated for specific needs (i.e.; medical team, mental health team, etc.).

Emergency or Disaster Response

During a response, volunteer roles will vary depending on the assignment as well as the type and scale of the emergency or disaster. At the time of activation and upon arrival on site, a job description and full instructions will be given to the volunteer as well as a brief safety training. If *Just in Time* training is needed for their job, this will also be provided prior to the volunteer beginning their assigned role.

If one of our specialty teams is needed, those volunteers serving on that team will likely be activated within the capacity of that role, however, this is not guaranteed. Volunteers will be utilized where they are most needed in the community.



Medical Credentialing

Utah Responds is a statewide site for MRC members that is linked to the Utah Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing (DOPL) website. When a volunteer inputs their medical license number, the system automatically accesses DOPL to verify their credentials. This is intended to save time after an emergency and get volunteers to work sooner.

Activation

When an emergency or disaster happens, it is imperative that MRC volunteers wait for a formal activation and instructions from their Unit Coordinator BEFORE activating. Volunteers who self activate can contribute to confusion and other potential liability issues for themselves and others.

When activation of MRC volunteers is necessary, the Unit Coordinator will be given instructions to do so from the Davis County Health Department Health Officer. Upon receiving this instruction, the Unit Coordinator will formally activate volunteers as follows;

1. A notification with specific instructions will be sent via Utah Responds to all DCMRC members. It will be sent to all contacts listed under your profile. This may include email, phone and text message.
2. If computers and other electronic communications are unavailable, the Unit Coordinator will contact Team Leaders to instruct them to contact their team members directly.
3. If you have not received any communication from the Unit Coordinator within 24 hours after the emergency or disaster, go to your city administrative building to see if they have been contacted by the Unit Coordinator.
4. Additional information and instructions will be communicated as needed through one or more of these channels.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS!!!

Make sure your family and pets are safe and taken care of BEFORE reporting to your assigned shift/role!

DON'T self activate!

Responding

When responding to a disaster or emergency, it is important for MRC volunteers to follow all instructions from the Unit Coordinator. These instructions will include information about job roles, work sites, shift times and length and where to report for their job. Reporting sites may be different from the actual work site. In these cases, transportation may be provided to the site or volunteers will be given driving instructions to the site.

When reporting to a job site, you will need to check in at the volunteer reception desk. You will be required to sign in with a picture ID and then you will receive your DCMRC ID badge (if you don't already have one). This badge identifies you as a DCMRC member and is required to be worn at all times during your shift. At that time, you will also receive information about your job and instructions on where to go for your briefing.

The briefing is where you will meet your supervisor and other team members; receive your job description; acquire your safety and *Just in Time* training (if needed); and briefed on any other relevant information about the response efforts. All volunteers are required to attend their pre-shift briefing before performing their assigned job duties.

During your shift, if you need to leave for any reason, it is imperative that you inform your direct supervisor before leaving the job site. It is their responsibility to ensure all volunteers are accounted for and are safe, so taking the time to let them know what is going on will help them do their job.

When leaving a job site, whether at the end of your shift or early for an emergency, it is important for you sign out at the volunteer reception desk. This helps ensure volunteer safety and may be needed later as documentation for cost reimbursement from the federal government.

Here are some important reminders for reporting to your job site;

- **Be sure to wear appropriate clothing for weather and for the type of job you will be doing. Under no circumstances should a volunteer wear flip flops or sandals to a response site.**

- **Don't bring children or pets with you to your job site unless instructed to do so. Typically, childcare and pet sheltering is not provided for volunteers. These needs should be addressed prior to reporting to your job site.**

Confidentiality

During the course of your time working in a disaster response, you may have access to confidential information about victims and their families. As a DCMRC member, you are required to safeguard this type of information. This includes; NOT discussing it with other volunteers, family members or friends; practicing safe procedures for storing paperwork; and not taking and/or posting pictures and/or information on social media outlets. Volunteers can be held liable for any damages caused by a breach of this policy.

Media

DCMRC members should NEVER talk to the media about the disaster or emergency response. When this type of event happens, the lead agency will assign someone to be the Public Information Officer. This person will be responsible for all communications with the media, including posting on social media.

The purpose of having one contact is to ensure that all information that is released to the public is accurate and consistent. When conflicting information is reported, it can cause panic in the community. In addition, the Public Information Officer is specifically trained to deal with the media and likely has established relationships with them.

Liability Protection

Volunteers of a Medical Reserve Corps are given protections under the following federal and state laws:

Federal Volunteer Protection Act of 1997

1. Law coverage and limitations: No volunteer of a non-profit organization or governmental entity shall be liable for harm caused by an act of omission of the volunteer on behalf of the organization or entity if:
 - a. the volunteer was acting within the scope of the volunteer's responsibilities in the nonprofit organization or governmental entity at the time of the act or omission;
 - b. the volunteer was properly licensed, certified, or authorized to engage in the activity or practice (if applicable);
 - c. the harm was not caused by willful or criminal misconduct, gross negligence, reckless misconduct, or a conscious, flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of the individual harmed by the volunteer; and
 - d. the harm was not caused by the volunteer operating a motor vehicle, vessel, aircraft, or other vehicle for which an operator's license or insurance is required by the state.
2. Preemption: The Volunteer Protection Act preempts state laws that contradict it. The Act does not preempt state laws that add additional volunteer protection from liability.
3. Exceptions: The Act does not apply to any misconduct that:
 1. constitutes a crime of violence... or act of international terrorism;

2. constitutes a hate crime
3. involves a sexual offense
4. involves misconduct for which the defendant has been found to have violated a Federal or State, civil rights law; or
5. where the defendant was under the influence of intoxicating alcohol or any drug at the time of the misconduct.

Utah Code 26A-1-126 Medical Reserve Corps

1. Law coverage and limitations: This law gives the local health department the authority to create and activate a Medical Reserve Corps, in which appropriate health care professionals can respond to a local, state or national emergency, as well as a public health emergency.
 - a. A Medical Reserve Corps can include: licensed professionals (under Title 58, Occupations and Professions) who are operating within the scope of their practice; those who are exempt from licensure, such as a practicing student; and those who held a valid license that was in good standing within ten years of the declared emergency.
 - b. A Medical Reserve Corps member must carry identification that is issued by the health department and that designates him/her as an MRC volunteer.
 - c. The health department must maintain a database of registered MRC volunteers, which must be made available to the public as well as the Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing.

Utah Code 67-20-3 "Volunteer Government Workers Act"

1. Law coverage:
 - a. A volunteer is regarded as a government employee for receiving workers' compensation medical benefits for all volunteer-related illnesses and injuries.
 - b. A volunteer is regarded as a government employee for operating motor vehicles or equipment if the volunteer has the appropriate license to do so.
 - c. A volunteer is regarded as a government employee for the purposes of liability protection and indemnification normally afforded to paid government employees.

2. Exceptions:

- a. A "volunteer" means any person who donates service without pay or compensation except expenses actually and reasonably incurred as approved by the supervising agency.
- b. According to this act, a volunteer does not include the following: a person participating as a human research subject and compensatory service workers (such as those sentenced to community service hours in court).
- c. A volunteer must be approved by the agency that he/she is serving.

Utah Code 78-19-2 Utah Volunteer Protection Act

No volunteer providing services for a nonprofit organization incurs any legal liability for any act of omission of the volunteer while providing services for the nonprofit organization and no volunteer incurs any personal liability for any tort claim or other action seeking damages for an injury arising from any act or omission of the (volunteer or) nonprofit organization if:

- a. the individual was acting in good faith and reasonably believed he was acting within the scope of his functions and duties;
- b. the damage or injury was not caused by an intentional or knowing act by the volunteer, which constitutes illegal, willful, or wanton misconduct.

Utah Code 78-11-22 Good Samaritan Act

1. Law coverage: A person who renders emergency care at or near the scene of, or during an emergency, gratuitously and in good faith, is not liable for any civil damages or penalties as a result of any act or omission by the person rendering the emergency care, unless the person is grossly negligent or caused the emergency. This includes people that assist government agencies or political subdivisions in the following activities:
 - a. controlling the causes of epidemic and communicable diseases and other conditions significantly affecting the public health
 - b. controlling bioterrorism and disease

Personal Preparedness

Personal preparedness is paramount to ensuring you are ready to respond if DCMRC is activated for a disaster or emergency response. Ways you can prepare include;

- Packing a “go” bag
- Writing a Family Preparedness Plan
- Including pets in your Plan
- Having a Family Communication Plan
- Preparing a 96-hour kit for each member of your family
- Making sure that you are both physically and mentally healthy to respond.

There is a lot of great information available online that can assist you in preparing for a disaster or emergency. Here are some great resources to get you started;

<http://www.utah.gov/beready/index.html>

<http://www.ready.gov/>

Personal Wellness

Personal wellness is an important aspect of being an effective MRC volunteer. During a response, volunteers may work in fast paced, high stress environments, so it is very important that they are as healthy as they can be during non-emergency times.

Wellness is a holistic approach to overall health and well-being that includes getting enough rest, eating a healthy diet, getting regular exercise and engaging in healthy stress management activities. Taking the time to be as healthy as you can be now will ensure you are ready to respond when a disaster or emergency strikes. In addition, it decreases your risk of becoming another victim during the response.

Training

DCMRC members have opportunities for additional training to prepare them to respond to a disaster or emergency. Local Davis County trainings are available several times throughout the year that are specific to DCMRC’s unit roles in the community. Other regional and statewide trainings are usually available on an annual basis in the form of conferences and summits. These events are usually FREE or low cost for volunteers.

In addition, DCMRC members are sometimes invited to attend trainings that are hosted by other MRC units in the state. These are great opportunities to network with other volunteers from other areas and to obtain training that otherwise may not be available to them.

Exercises

Exercises are a critical part of emergency preparedness because they provide opportunities to test emergency plans and to make improvements as necessary. There are five types of exercises that are designed to build upon each other. These exercises include;

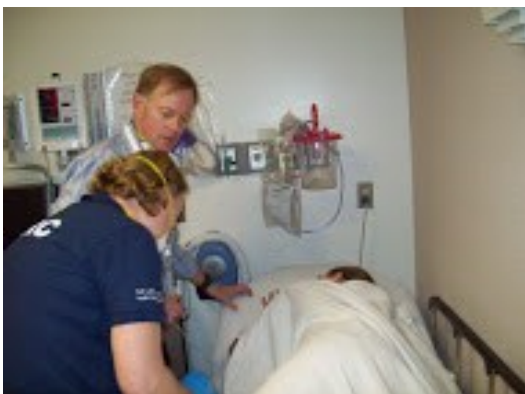
WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS: Provides basic training for team members and are designed to familiarize team members with emergency response, business continuity and crisis communications plans and their roles and responsibilities as defined in emergency plans.

TABLETOP: Discussion-based sessions where team members meet in an informal, classroom setting to discuss their roles during an emergency and their responses to a particular emergency situation. A facilitator guides participants through a discussion of one or more scenarios. The duration of a tabletop exercise depends on the audience, the topic being exercised and the exercise objectives.

FUNCTIONAL: Allows personnel to validate plans and readiness by performing their duties in a simulated operational environment. Activities for a functional exercise are scenario-driven, such as the failure of a critical business function or a specific hazard scenario. Functional exercises are designed to exercise specific team members, procedures and resources (e.g. communications, warning, notifications and equipment set-up).

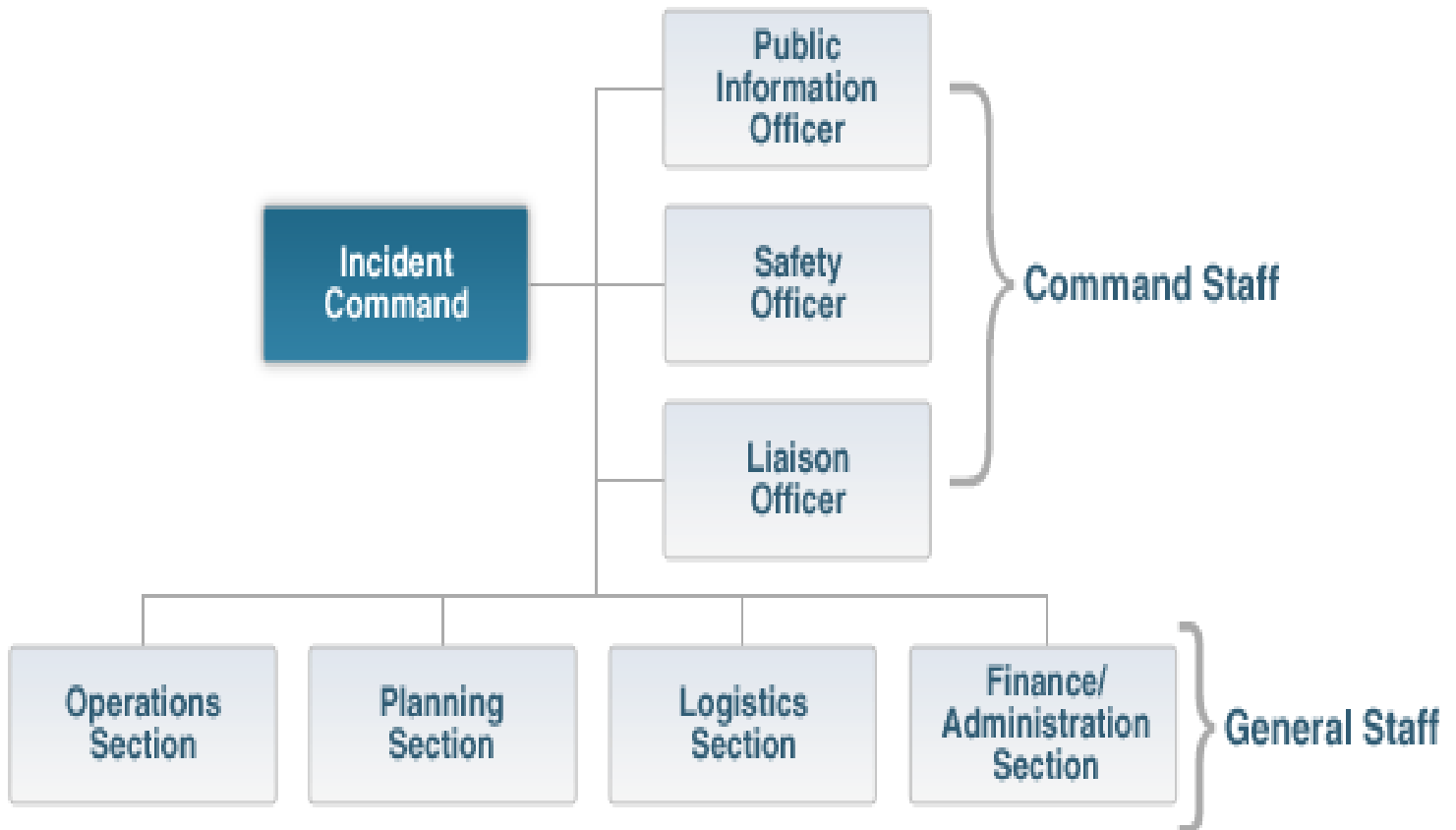
FULL SCALE: A full-scale exercise is as close to the real thing as possible. It is a lengthy exercise which takes place on location using, as much as possible, the equipment and personnel that would be called upon in a real event. Full-scale exercises are conducted by public agencies. They often include participation from local businesses.

DCMRC members have participated in all of these types of exercises locally, in partnership with other MRC units around the state and/or at the annual statewide summit. Moving forward, DCMRC will integrate more local exercises into their training plan.



Incident Command System

The Incident Command System (ICS) is a standardized approach to the command, control, and coordination of emergency response providing a common hierarchy within which responders from multiple agencies can be effective. Below is a basic flow chart of this system. More information about this system is included in the required FEMA training courses IS 100 and 200 as well.



In an event that DCMRC members are activated for a disaster or emergency response, those volunteers would be integrated into this system. DCMRC volunteers will most likely be assigned to a supervisor within the General Staff in the Operations or Logistics Sections. In special circumstances, a DCMRC volunteer may be assigned to a different area depending upon the needs of the community and the skill set of the volunteer.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do I need a background check?

In a disaster/emergency response, DCMRC members may work with vulnerable populations such as children or seniors and/or may have access to sensitive information. In an effort to protect both the volunteer and those they work with, a background check is necessary.

If my job has completed a background check for me, can Davis County MRC just use that one instead of conducting a new one?

Unfortunately, DCMRC does not have access to other agency's background check information, so they are not able to use this information.

Who has access to my social security number in Utah Responds?

No one. Once you put it into Utah Responds, it is not accessible by anyone, including your Unit Coordinator.

Does MRC work with CERT?

Yes. In the past, DCMRC has worked closely with CERT, however, in recent years, not as much. DCMRC Unit Coordinator has plans to strengthen this relationship in the future.

How can I help promote MRC to my city or local community?

Volunteers can always be advocates for DCMRC by talking to neighbors and friends about DCMRC.

How do I refer someone to become an MRC volunteer?

Refer them to the Utah Responds website to create a profile or they can contact the DCMRC Unit Coordinator directly for questions and information.

What is the difference between MRC and CERT?

MRC and CERT each have important, but different roles in a disaster response. CERT volunteers respond at their local city level to help their local community members. DCMRC volunteers respond at the county level to supplement the county Public Health and EMS Systems.

Does MRC partner with the American Red Cross?

At the national level, MRC does have a Memorandum of Understanding, so yes, they do work together. At the local level, the status and strength of this relationship varies from region to region. In Northern Utah, this relationship has had its challenges, however, the DCMRC Unit Coordinator is working to address this issue and to strengthen this relationship moving forward.

Can I be a volunteer for Red Cross or CERT as well as MRC?

Absolutely. Each of these organizations will fulfill different roles in a disaster response. In situations where these roles overlap or conflict with one another, however, the volunteer may need to choose in which role they choose to volunteer their time for that particular emergency.

Online Resources

Registration

www.utahresponds.org

Training

<https://training.fema.gov/is/nims.aspx>

<https://www.utah.train.org/>

Personal Preparedness

<http://www.utah.gov/beready/index.html>

<http://www.ready.gov/>

National MRC Information

<https://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/HomePage>

<http://nacchopreparedness.org/>

Social Media

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Davis-County-Medical-Reserve-Corps/118950724831594?fref=ts>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Utah-Medical-Reserve-Corps/405792949562976?fref=ts>

Twitter @utahmrc and @daviscountymrc