

Allen County
Medical Reserve
Corps Volunteer
Handbook



Allen County
Public Health
2014

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What is the MRC?

The Ohio Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) is a community-based, civilian, volunteer program that helps build the public health infrastructure of communities nationwide and in our state. The MRC is under the Citizen Corps which is in the Division of the Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corp housed within the U.S Office of the Surgeon General. Each OMRC unit is organized and trained to address a wide range of challenges from public health emergencies to disaster response.

Allen County MRC serves the cities of Lima, Delphos, and all of Allen County Ohio. This unit is housed under Allen County Public Health, and was established in June 2006. The Allen County MRC unit is comprised of medical and non-medical volunteers.

History of the MRC

After 9/11 we realized we needed a way to have volunteers credentialed and affiliated with an organization. The MRC was founded after President Bush's 2002 State of the Union Address, in which he asked all Americans to volunteer in support of their country.

Allen County MRC serves as one of the 84 Ohio and 996 national units comprised of over 200,000 volunteers. On the national scale that is a lot, but on the local scale it is not.

Allen County MRC Mission

The mission of the Allen County MRC Unit is to collaborate with our community partners to prepare and respond to any natural or manmade disaster.

Allen County MRC Goals

Our Goals:

- Strengthen our capacity to respond to natural or manmade disasters.
- Provide guidance in comprehensive disaster planning with public health focus.
- Develop functional capacity for planning, activities, and workforce readiness related to disaster response.

Organization Structure

The Allen County MRC is housed in and majorly funded through Allen County Public Health. The Allen County MRC Volunteer Coordinator is over all of the Allen County MRC volunteers as well as the volunteer program as a whole. This is a monetarily compensated position. The last portion of the Allen County MRC organization structure is the most

important, the volunteers! There are two volunteer tiers, Responder and Leadership. The Responder tier is for those with a schedule that will not permit them to attend meetings and pre-event trainings and exercises. The Leadership tier is for those who can devote more time and come to the meetings, exercises, and trainings. A more detailed description of these tiers can be found in the next section.

Volunteers Tiers & Teams

Volunteer Tiers

Volunteers fall into two tiers once they have joined the Allen County MRC:

- **Responders Tier:** The Responder Volunteer chooses to be available only in the event of a large-scale public health emergency. This level is designed for volunteers that do not have much time available to attend pre-event trainings or exercises, and choose to only complete the online orientation, and the online FEMA- IS 100 and 700. In the event of MRC activation, these volunteers will be provided “just-in-time” on-site training.

Links to Trainings:



Allen County MRC
Orientation.ppt

1. **Orientation-**
2. **IS 100.b** Introduction to Incident Command System-
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/courseOverview.aspx?code=IS-100.b>
3. **IS-700.A:** National Incident Management System (NIMS) An Introduction-
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/courseOverview.aspx?code=IS-700.a>

- **Leadership Tier:** The Leadership Tier requires a larger time commitment, including additional hours of training and hours of volunteer service per year. Leadership level participation allows volunteers with an interest in taking on more responsibility in a disaster to help us keep Allen County healthy through any type of disaster. The mandatory trainings are marked with an asterisk among the other highly recommended trainings for volunteers in this tier. Other trainings that are not listed will be communicated as they arise.

List of Trainings:



- ***Orientation-**

- ***IS 100.b** Introduction to Incident Command System-
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/courseOverview.aspx?code=IS-100.b>
- ***IS-700.A:** National Incident Management System (NIMS) An Introduction-
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/courseOverview.aspx?code=IS-700.a>
- **IS-200.B:** ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents-
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/courseOverview.aspx?code=IS-200.b>
- **IS-22:** Are You Ready? An In-depth Guide to Citizen Preparedness-
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/courseOverview.aspx?code=IS-22>
- POD Trainings
- Safety
- HIPPA
- Blood Borne Pathogens
- Psychological First Aid or other Mental Health in Disasters Course
- Public Health Immunization Trainings
- Working with Special Needs Online Training
- Core Disaster Life Support (CDLS)
- Basic Disaster Life Support (BDLS)
- Advanced Disaster Life Support (ADLS)
- Blood Borne Pathogens
- Shelter Operations (ARC)
- Responding to Emergencies (ARC)

It is the volunteer's responsibility to let the Coordinator know that they want to serve as a leadership volunteer and which team they choose to serve on.

Volunteer Teams

Design and staff new response teams as appropriate. Teams Include:

- **POD Team**
A POD, or Point of Dispensing, is a method of response in a public health crisis requiring the widespread distribution of medication. In the event of such an emergency, multiple PODs may be set up throughout the community to offer medication to many people. Clinical volunteers such as pharmacists, nurses, paramedics, mental health professionals and physicians are encouraged to join as well as non-clinical members in a support role. POD team members can participate in several trainings, drills and exercises per year. Completion of POD101 online is a requirement.
- **Mental Health Team**
Mental health is an important part of an emergency response. Our mental health volunteers take a Psychological First Aid training and support both

the health departments and partners in the community during a response. Members of this team include, but not limited to: LSWs, RNs, Psychologists, Psychiatrists, School Counselors and more.

- **Leadership Team**

The Leadership Team for the Allen County MRC meets once a ~~month~~ quarter via conference call or in person, and provides oversight and input into training, exercising, and recruitment decisions. This group is made up of Leadership level volunteers that are leaders in their fields. Coordinator is responsible for creating the agenda, minutes, and sending out reminders about these meetings. Our long-term objectives are to:

- Develop and maintain a framework to match volunteers' skills with the community's needs
- Provide opportunities for volunteers to assist with non-emergency public health functions/initiatives, such as health education, vaccination clinics and public awareness campaigns.
- Deliver comprehensive training opportunities to volunteers through simulation exercises, classroom training and access to online education resources.
- Seek and provide funding to support the organization into the future.

- **Medical Team**

The Medical Team is comprised of individuals with a background in medicine. This team includes, but is not limited to: MD, DO, PA, RN, LPN and more. They are to assist the Leadership Team in developing trainings and CEU opportunities that meet the medical community's needs.

Volunteer Expectations

Without our Allen County MRC volunteers we would not be able to serve our community to the degree it deserves. You are greatly appreciated, and because of that we want to make sure you are as prepared as possible. Steps to ensure you are ready to carry out the duties of an Allen County MRC volunteer are outlined below. For job specific duties, please reference the Allen County Public Health Point of Dispensing (POD) Plans where you will find Job Action Sheets (JAS).

1. Make sure your family has a preparedness plan and exercise it
2. Complete all required trainings within the first 6 months of becoming a member
3. Complete the registration on www.ohioresponds.gov
4. Update all personal information as needed
5. Attend at least 1 meeting a year. This only applies to those not in a leadership role.
6. Know your limits and communicate them with the Volunteer Coordinator
7. Stay up to date on activities and opportunities the unit offers
8. Respond and report to calls for assistance sent via e-mail, phone, or newsletter
9. Report any incidences of violence, discrimination ... to the Volunteer Coordinator immediately
10. Maintain documentation of credentials

11. If you decide you no longer can or would like to be a member of the Allen County MRC, let the Volunteer Coordinator know immediately.
12. Maintain a positive attitude

Protocols for Deployment

This section outlines procedures for non-emergency and emergency situations. It also discusses how Allen County MRC Volunteers would respond to a national request for volunteers.

Non-emergency Procedures

Non-Emergency Projects

Situations in which MRC volunteers may be asked to assist include:

- Emergency preparedness public awareness campaigns
- Vaccination clinics
- Public Health program support
- Emergency preparedness education
- MRC recruitment
- Special projects
- Drills, trainings, exercises and workshops
- Drills, trainings, exercises and workshops

Notification and Communication

Non-emergency communications will most often be achieved via Ohio Responds Volunteer Registry (the State ESARVHP system), although the phone and postal system may occasionally be used. A comprehensive MRC Newsletter is distributed to all volunteers on a quarterly basis. The MRC Coordinator is responsible for creating the content. Reading this newsletter and the volunteer opportunity and training e-mail sent by the coordinator is the best way for volunteers to stay up to date about MRC activities.

In all disasters an alert will be sent out through the Ohio Responds system through its alerting capabilities via phone and/or e-mail.

When non-emergency volunteer opportunities arise, the MRC Program Coordinator will notify volunteers via e-mail or the Ohio Responds Volunteer Registry if it is a last minute request the Coordinator wants to accommodate. The request will include a description of the volunteer need, the dates and times of the need, what volunteers will be requested to do, and contact information.

Training and Exercises

Orientation sessions are required for each volunteer, and include information on Allen County's emergency response plans; an overview of the steps involved in volunteer activation; a summary of the Medical Reserve corps organizational structure, and other volunteer opportunities. This orientation also includes an overview of NIMS, family preparedness, and has been created with a focus on the Eight Core Competencies

recommended at the national level. MRC Coordinator tracks orientation participation, and ensures that all volunteers receive this training. When disaster strikes, those that have not completed the orientation will need to attend a Just-in-time MRC orientation.

Participation in exercises is not mandatory, but is a great way to practice skills, meet new people, and support and augment the preparedness of Allen County. Given the large number of volunteers necessary to staff a Point of Dispensing (POD) in Allen County, many exercises focus on filling this need. The MRC Coordinator is responsible for

1. Planning exercises and trainings in which MRC volunteers can participate and documenting that participation.
2. MRC participation in agency, county and state exercises, playing MRC volunteers, not just victims.

Designs and implements communication drills through the Ohio Responds Volunteer Registry semi-yearly to test readiness to quickly respond.

Ohio Responds Volunteer Registry, Non-Emergency Alerting System

The MRC Coordinator will test the Ohio Responds system twice a year. This can be during a real event or it can be a drill. An emergency message is sent out to the members and they are asked to update their contact information in the system if necessary. An AAR will be created after each test drill.

Volunteer Management System, Non-Emergency Data Management

MRC volunteer information is maintained in Ohio Responds Volunteer Registry at the Ohio Department of Health. Information includes essential data (phone, e-mail, licensure information) as well as data that contributes to efficient management of the MRC program (credentialing information, volunteer interests, volunteer's level of involvement, etc.).

To update state database: www.ohioresponds.org

Go to the MRC page, click on volunteer log in, and then enter the username and password.

Emergency Procedures

The Allen County MRC organization will never be the lead agency in disaster response or recovery. The organization seeks to support the staffing needs of other response agencies such as public health organizations, hospitals, the Red Cross, and other first responder groups. During the response, these lead agencies will request volunteers, and the Allen County MRC will provide these volunteers. All volunteers will respond within the ICS system of management. The MRC has a prescribed role in other several other disaster response plans, such as the mass prophylaxis plan, mass fatality plan, and other public health response plans. In addition to these prescribed responses, it is expected that the Allen County MRC will be requested in other disaster situations, as needs arise. For details about the specifics of MRC Coordinator responsibilities during an emergency event, see the Allen County Emergency Response Plans.

Activation Checklist

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

Phase 1: Alert

Phase 2: Activate
Phase 3: Operations
Phase 4: Demobilization
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 email or phone call through the Ohio Responds Volunteer Registry. This will give the volunteer a sense of what has occurred and the likelihood of their future involvement in the response.

Phase 2: Activation

If an organization is in need of medical volunteers during an emergency or disaster, they may request Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers.

The Volunteer Coordinator will contact volunteers according to the information given in the Ohio Responds Volunteer Registry, and volunteers will indicate their ability to assist in the event. When volunteers receive the call, they:

- Evaluate their ability to respond
- Consider modes of transportation
- Notify family / activate their family's emergency plan
- Report at the time and place specified. At that time, volunteers will be under the responsibility of the receiving organization, guided by the provisions outlined in the Standard MOU if MOU is agreed upon.

Just-In-Time Training

- 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. If volunteers report directly to a receiving agency, Just-In-Time training will be the responsibility of that agency. All Allen County MRC volunteers should be:
 - Provided with Just-in-Time training at a centralized location or at the response site before assisting in an event.
 - Given the appropriate background needed in order to safely and effectively participate in a response.
 - Provided with preventative medicine or vaccine if needed.
 - Provided with an MRC orientation if the volunteer has not already completed one. This is a short presentation of about 20 slides that can be done as a PowerPoint Presentation or given as a handout.

Phase 3: Operations

- The operations phase is the phase of the process where the actual volunteer service takes place. An MRC ID may be necessary for volunteers. One will be made for the volunteer on site should they not already have one.
- Security will be provided
- Volunteers for the Allen County MRC will be instructed not to bring weapons to any response effort
- Volunteers are expected to follow Allen County Public Health behavior Guidelines, the rules and regulations of the agency requesting volunteer assistance, ICS principles, and report to only one supervisor

Phase 4: Demobilization

This phase takes place when volunteer services are no longer needed. During a disaster, if volunteer availability permits, those in the MRC may be asked to serve for more than one shift. Each demobilization will include a hot-wash to summarize the event. Mental health resources will be presented again at this time. Demobilization looks differently from incident to incident, so follow demobilization instructions provided by your supervisor at the incident.

Phase 5: Debrief

This phase occurs after the disaster or drill is over. MRC leadership will be gathering feedback and information from all volunteers who respond to the event to collect their thoughts on the Allen County MRC process and future needs, as well as to evaluate what worked and did not work for the response effort. Results will focus on:

1. What was supposed to happen?
2. What did happen?
3. What went well?
4. What would the leadership suggest we do differently next time?

This evaluation can be given at the end of the volunteer's operational period or sent afterward via email. Store this information electronically on the MRC drive at Allen County Public Health and try to incorporate lessons learned into future planning and response.

Assisting Another MRC Unit

When you register on www.ohioresponds.gov, you will be given the option to receive notifications from other units requesting volunteers. If you have selected that option, and you receive a request to assist another unit in or out of state read the following instructions. All volunteers have responsibilities that must be met before they can respond to a callout. If an MRC Volunteer is activated by the Allen County MRC unit and then receives a request from another unit, volunteers will need to be released from their current responsibility before accepting another assignment. Similarly, prior to accepting deployment, volunteers will be required to obtain consent from their employer if deployment interferes with their work schedule.