



Southwest Utah MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS

Handbook

Division of Emergency Preparedness & Response
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome	3
About This Handbook	4
History of Citizen Corps/ Medical Reserve Corps	5
Southwest Utah Medical Reserve Corps	6
General Information/NIMS	8
Policies	14
Code of Conduct	17
Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities	19
Training and Tier Instructions	
Forms	
Notes	



WELCOME

Dear Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer,

Welcome to the Southwest Utah Medical Reserve Corps (SWUMRC). This is a fantastic organization that 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. We are looking forward to having you work along with us, as well as with other good members of our great community.

The SWUMRC serves Washington, Iron, Kane, Garfield and Beaver counties of Utah. The purpose of the SWUMRC is to utilize the many different abilities that members of our communities have. We also are striving to work with each individual member in being prepared for an emergency, along with the help of our Emergency Preparedness Department.

Our handbook was designed to help answer any questions that you may have, and to give members guidance throughout their SWUMRC experience. Please take time to read through it and refer back to it when necessary.

Always feel free to call the Southwest Utah Public Health Department for additional information, or to pass along suggestions or comments.

Thank you so much for making the Medical Reserve Corps part of your volunteer activities, and welcome to the Southwest Utah Medical Reserve Corps!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paulette Valentine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paulette Valentine
Medical Reserve Corps Director
Director of Emergency Preparedness
Southwest Utah Public Health Department

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

Your volunteer participation is an important step to an exciting organization, which offers a variety of opportunities to serve our community. The following pages describe the benefits to our volunteers along with policies and procedures that provide a framework for the services we deliver.

The information in this handbook is extensive but not complete. Each position has policies and procedures specific to the function you will perform.

You will learn much of the information regarding your responsibilities on-the-job. If you have any questions along the way, contact the SWUMRC Coordinator, Suz Roam at 435-986-2556 or sroam@swuhealth.org.

Please take the time to read this handbook carefully. Then, keep it as a reference resource to use when you have questions or concerns. As we go through training sessions, this will be a good place to store your notes and handouts for future reference.

We wish you a rewarding experience as a Medical Reserve Corps Team Member.



HISTORY OF CITIZEN CORPS AND MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS

UNITING COMMUNITIES – PREPARING THE NATION

In his 2002 State of the Union Message, President 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 announced the creation of USA Freedom Corps to help Americans answer his call to service and to foster a culture of service, citizenship and responsibility.

The **Citizen Corps** is a component of USA Freedom Corps that creates local opportunities for individuals to volunteer towards helping their communities prepare for and respond to emergencies.

The Medical Reserve Corps is the component of the Citizen Corps that brings together local health professionals and others community support members with relevant skills to volunteer in their community. They will assist local, existing community emergency medical response systems, as well as provide a group of readily trained and available resources to help our community deal with pressing public health needs and improvements.

The Southwest Utah Medical Reserve Corps is proud to be part of a national Medical Reserve Corps recognized by the office of the Surgeon General.

Volunteers are the key to making our community a safer place to live. We look forward to working with you in this important community effort.

SOUTHWEST UTAH MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS

Mission of the Southwest Utah Medical Reserve Corps

The primary mission of a Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Unit is to facilitate maximum utilization of medical and health care volunteers in the community." We at Southwest Utah Medical Reserve Corps have adopted this mission in addition to making it our main objective.

Our goal is to allow local healthcare professionals and community support volunteers/team members to contribute their skills and expertise throughout the year, as well as during times of community need. Our MRC Unit is made up of active and retired volunteers who can assist our community during an emergency such as an earthquake, an influenza epidemic or an act of terrorism.

Benefits to the Community

Major local emergencies can overwhelm the capability of medical staff and first responders, especially during the first 12-72 hours. Having citizens who are prepared to take care of themselves, their families and others during times of crisis will allow first responders to focus their efforts on the most critical, life threatening situations.

An organized and well trained Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Unit translates into volunteers who can effectively respond to an emergency, are familiar with their health department and community's response plan, know what materials are available for their use, recognize their partners in the response area, and know where their skills can be utilized to their best advantage in a coordinated manner.

The skills and services of each MRC member are critical to our success and effectiveness. Volunteer and paid staff are colleagues who form a team united by shared goals and common values. Like any team, the contribution of each member is unique and critical to the team's success.

An Organized Team Approach

During a disaster, an emergency management plan will be activated. The plan defines how emergency personnel (fire, law enforcement, emergency medical services, etc.) will respond to and manage the emergency. Spontaneous volunteers may hinder rescue efforts because they may not be familiar with local plans or procedures.

By creating an MRC Unit that is linked to emergency plans across the five county region (Beaver, Garfield, Iron, Kane and Washington), the members of the Southwest Utah Medical Reserve Corps (SWUMRC) can truly benefit the community by knowing what their role is during an emergency. They will also know how they fit into the emergency plan and how best to respond so that they are a positive support structure for the first responders.

Results and Benefits Expected

Recruitment for the SWUMRC is community-based, and is not limited to physicians and nurses. It is inclusive of all medical professionals, as well as those in community support roles. The SWUMRC will offer flexibility and allow volunteers to establish "volunteer time limits" to accommodate their schedules.

The SWUMRC will be incorporated into the five-county emergency plan, as well as each of the local hospital plans. All emergency and disaster related functions of the SWUMRC will be initiated through Southwest Utah Public Health Department, following the National Incident Management System (NIMS - explanation will be given below).

The SWUMRC is sponsored and activated by the Southwest Utah Public Health Department (SWUPHD). Once the MRC has been activated, members will be contacted (usually through the Utah Responds system) and given specific information about the event and where to report if they are available.

When you check into the designated site, your personal information will be verified and you will receive any special training (based on the disaster) before being sent out to your assignment. You will NOT be asked to do anything outside your scope of practice. After your assignment is complete you will return to the registration area, check out and be debriefed. If you are able and there are still assignments you may be asked to deploy again, the same day or at a later date.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Goals and Objectives

- Recruit, enroll and maintain a corps of medical, active and retired health professionals and community support non-medical volunteers sufficient to staff mass vaccination/prophylaxis sites in the five-county region.
- Include all of our diverse communities in the Southwest Utah Medical Reserve Corps volunteer base.
- Produce exceptional training opportunities for volunteers that will enhance their knowledge and experience ranging from individual to community and regional preparedness.
- Develop ways to help identify the community's needs and how we may accommodate them, including surge capacity.
- Provide opportunities for volunteers to assist with non-emergency public health functions/initiatives, such as health education and public awareness campaigns.
- Foster a culture of acceptance, recognition of the value of volunteers and utilization of volunteer staffing within the five-county region.
- Promote a framework of support that will sustain the MRC Unit.

Each applicant with the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) will have licenses verified, and a background check. Once those have been completed, each volunteer will have an interview and a picture taken for their badge credentials.

Certification Requirements

- SWUMRC volunteers/team members agree to be available in the event of a large public health emergency with the potential to overwhelm traditional health systems. Minimum requirements for volunteers are:
 - Citizen of United States or legal/registered alien
 - Current mailing address and contact information
 - Current professional licensure information (for medical professionals)

The SWUMRC office will keep volunteers informed of upcoming trainings, volunteer opportunities and needs, and pertinent program information.

Volunteer Safety

Part of the purpose for the Citizen Corps organization is to ensure preparedness and safety of those who volunteer. This is one of the reasons that training participation is encouraged - so that all volunteers have the background needed to understand the situations and what is needed to assist safely. All MRC volunteers are required to use universal precautions on all patients.

Maintaining Readiness

Training exercises are essential elements for ensuring readiness. Being ready to respond in an emergency does not just happen -- readiness requires planning, organization and practice. Each member should participate in at least one MRC drill per year.

Ensuring you are prepared at home and at work will allow you to be ready to respond when you are needed. The MRC training includes specific details that will enable you to prepare your family and home.

Training and Tier System

The recommended training modules and tier system are outlined in the training section of this binder. If you have completion and/or certification in any of these categories, please send a copy of each to Suz Roam the MRC Coordinator at: sroam@swuhealth.org. You can also send a fax 435-652-4070 or mail to:

Suz Roam / MRC Coordinator
Southwest Utah Public Health Department
620 South 400 East, Suite 400
St George UT 84770

Recognition

As training modules are completed, Volunteer Team Members will be given pin recognition, as well as equipment that can be used during deployment.

You will also be invited to the annual Volunteer Resource Center Volunteer Recognition Luncheon during National Volunteer Week.

Funding

Volunteer time is uncompensated. The MRC has received a grant from the Office of the Surgeon General, NACCHO grant, and partnership with Southern Utah Public Health Department to help pay for training, equipment and recruiting. The MRC is continually looking for funds to maintain and sustain the Corps training and equipment needs.

Uniform

All MRC volunteers will receive the standard uniform shirt. This is to be worn with clean, well-kept jeans or khaki pants and closed-toe shoes. Whenever you are attending an MRC event you should wear MRC apparel. We ask that you wear your MRC apparel for MRC events only. The MRC apparel shall be worn ONLY by MRC members. The MRC apparel shall not be loaned or given to any non-MRC member. If you leave the MRC for any reason, the MRC apparel shall be returned to the MRC coordinator.

National Incident Management Systems

The SWUMRC will operate in all emergencies and disasters using the Incident Command System. The following is a short review:

Incident Commander

The Incident Commander is the person in charge at the incident, and must be fully qualified to manage the incident. As incidents grow in size or become more complex a more highly qualified Incident Commander may be assigned by the responsible jurisdiction or agency. The Incident Commander may have one or more deputies from their agency or from other agencies or jurisdictions.

The Incident Commander may assign personnel for both a Command Staff and a General Staff. The Command Staff provides Information, Safety, and Liaison services for the entire organization. The General Staff are assigned major functional authority for Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration.

Initially, assigning tactical resources and overseeing operations will be under the direct supervision of the Incident Commander. As incidents grow, the Incident Commander may delegate authority for performance of certain activities to others as required. Taking over command at an incident always requires that there be a full briefing for the incoming Incident Commander, and notification that a change in command is taking place.

Command Staff

In addition to the primary incident response activities of Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration, the Incident Commander has responsibilities for several other important services. Depending on the size and type of an incident or event, it may be necessary to designate personnel to handle these additional activities.

Information Officer

The information officer will be the point of contact for the media, or other organizations seeking information directly from the incident or event.

Safety Officer

This individual monitors safety conditions and develops measures for assuring the safety of all assigned personnel.

Liaison Officer

On large incidents or events, representatives from other agencies may be assigned to the incident to coordinate their agency's involvement. The Liaison Officer will be their primary contact.

The General Staff

The people who perform the four major activities of Operations, Logistics, Planning, and Finance/Administration are designated as the General Staff. Each of the General Staff may have a deputy or more than one if necessary. The deputy can work with the primary position, work in relief capacity, or be assigned tasks.

Operations Section

The Incident Commander will determine the need for a separate Operations Section at an incident or event. Until Operations is established as a separate section, the IC will have direct control of tactical resources.

When activating an Operations Section, the IC will assign an individual as the Operations Section Chief. The Operations Section Chief will develop and manage the Operations Section to accomplish the incident objectives.

Planning Section

Briefly stated, the major activities of the Planning Section are to: Collect, evaluate, and display information about the incident.

Develop Incident Action Plans for each operational period, conduct long-range planning, and develop plans for demobilization at the end of the incident.

Maintain resource status information on all equipment and personnel assigned to the incident. Maintain incident documentation. The Planning Section is also the initial place of check-in for technical specialists assigned to the incident.

Logistics Section

The Logistics Section is responsible for all of the services and support needs of an incident, including obtaining and maintaining essential personnel, facilities, equipment, and supplies.

Finance/Administration Section

The Finance/Administration Section is set up for any incident that may require on-site financial management. More and more, larger incidents are using a Finance/Administration Section to monitor costs.

Incident Facilities

Facilities will be established depending on the kind and complexity of the incident or event. It is important to know and understand the names and functions of the principle ICS facilities. Not all of those listed below will necessarily be used.

Incident Command Post (ICP)

The location from which the Incident Commander oversees all incident operations. There is only one ICP for each incident or event. Every incident or event must have some form of an Incident Command Post.

Staging Areas

Locations at which resources are kept while awaiting incident assignment. Most large incidents will have a Staging Area, and some incident may have several. Staging Areas will be managed by a Staging Area Manger who reports to the Operations Section Chief or to the Incident Commander if an Operations Section has not been established.

Base

The location at the incident at which primary service and support activities are performed. Not all incidents will have a Base. There will only be one Base for each incident.

Camps

Incident locations where resources may be kept to support incident operations. Camps differ from Staging Areas in that essential support operations are done at Camps, and resources at Camps are not always immediately available for use. Not all incidents will have camps.

Helibase

A location in and around an incident area at which helicopters may be parked, maintained, fueled, and equipped for incident operations. Very large incidents may require more than one Helibase.

Helispots

Helispots are temporary locations where helicopters can land and load and off load personnel, equipment, and supplies. Large incidents may have several Helispots.

Incident Action Plan

Every incident must have an oral or written action plan. The purpose of the plan is to provide all incident supervisory personnel with directions for future actions. Action plans which include the measurable tactical operations to be achieved are always prepared around a time frame called an Operational Period.

Operational Periods can be of various lengths, but should be no longer than twenty-four hours. Twelve-hour Operational Periods are common on many large incidents. It is not unusual, however, to have much shorter Operational Periods covering, for example, two or four hour time periods. The length of an Operational Period will be based on the needs of the incident and these can change over the course of the incident.

The Incident Action Plan must be made known to all incident supervisory personnel. This can be done through briefings, by distributing a written plan prior to the start of the Operational Period, or by both methods.

Span of Control

Span of Control means how many organizational elements may be directly managed by another person. Maintaining adequate Span of Control throughout the ICS organization is very important. Effective Span of Control may vary from three to seven, and a ratio of one to five reporting elements is recommended. If the number of reporting elements fall outside of those ranges, expansion or consolidation of the organization may be necessary. There will be exceptions: For example, in some applications specially trained hand crews may utilize a large Span of Control.

Summary

There is no one "best" way to organize an incident. The organization should develop to meet the functions required. The characteristics of the incident and the management needs of the Incident Commander will determine what organization elements should be established. The incident organization may change over time to reflect the various phases of the incident.

POLICIES

Harassment Free Environment Policy

The Southwest Utah Medical Reserve Corps (SWUMRC) is committed to providing a harassment/discrimination-free work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment. It is the policy of the MRC that harassment based on race, color, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, disability, veteran status or any other basis is strictly prohibited.

Any harassment, whether verbal or physical, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It is the intent that all MRC volunteers will work in an environment free from discrimination and /or harassment by another employee, supervisor or another volunteer for any reason. Discriminatory conduct in any form undermines morale and interferes with productivity.

The MRC is committed to eradicating all discrimination in the workplace and specifically condemns sexual harassment of employees and volunteers by other employees or volunteers.

If you feel you may have been the subject of discrimination or harassment, you should contact the MRC Coordinator. Any reports of discrimination or harassment will be examined impartially and resolved promptly.

The MRC undertakes its responsibility to prevent workplace harassment seriously. To achieve these goals, the MRC presents all new volunteers with this policy during orientation at its annual training meetings.

Safety

Health and Safety for the personnel is the goal of the MRC. No job is considered so important or urgent that volunteers cannot take time to perform their job safely utilizing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

During your disaster job site orientation, your supervisor will discuss all the applicable safety and health rules with you. If you are unclear about any safety policies or procedures, ask your supervisor or volunteer manager.

As a MRC volunteer, you have a responsibility for your own safety and health. This includes using all required safety devices. You must also notify your supervisor of any physical conditions such as drowsiness due to

medication, illness or emotional strain, which may affect your performance and safety. You are expected to immediately report all work-related accidents, injuries, illnesses and near misses to your supervisor or MRC Coordinator.

Drug Free Workplace

The SWUMRC is dedicated to a safe, healthy and drug free work environment. All MRC volunteers are expected to report to work free from drug and/or alcohol impairment and to remain at work in a condition that enables them to perform their job duties in a safe, efficient, legal and professional manner. MRC encourages volunteers who may have alcohol and/or drug problems to voluntarily seek evaluation and treatment that will lead to successful rehabilitation. Volunteers must abide by the provisions of this policy as a condition of volunteer service.

Violence-Free Work Environment Policy

The SWUMRC is committed to our volunteer's safety and health. This policy has been developed to help ensure a safe workplace and to reduce the risk of violence.

The MRC does not tolerate any type of acts or a threat of violence committed by or against a volunteer, and therefore prohibits workplace violence and the possession of weapons by volunteers on the job and at the worksite.

In order to ensure a safe working environment, SWUMRC prohibits all persons from carrying a handgun, firearm, or weapon of any kind on assignments, regardless of whether the person is licensed to carry the weapon or not. This policy applies to all volunteers, clients, customers and visitors. All volunteers are also prohibited from carrying or using a weapon while in the course and scope of performing their job, whether they are on property at the time or not. This policy also prohibits weapons at any MRC sponsored functions, such as training, parties or any other events.

The only exception to this policy are police officers, private security guards or military personnel employed by federal or state government, who are engaged in official duties, and persons who have been given written consent by their supervisor or the MRC Coordinator to carry a weapon while performing specific tasks on behalf of the Citizen Corps.

If you feel threatened, you should retreat and request intervention from a supervisor or other available management staff. If fear or violence is imminent, immediately retreat and dial 911.

Contact:

Suz Roam
*Medical Reserve Corps
Coordinator*
SWUPHD
435-986-2556
sroam@swuhealth.org

Alternate
contact:

Paulette Valentine
*MRC Director
Director of Emergency Preparedness*
Southwest Utah Public Health Dept.
435-817-2698
pvalentine@swuhealth.org

CODE OF CONDUCT

In an effort to maintain the high standard of conduct expected and deserved by the American public and to enable the organization to continue to offer service required by those in need, the SWUMRC operates under the following Code of Conduct, applicable to all volunteers.

Code of Conduct

No volunteer shall:

- a. Authorize the use of or use for the benefit or advantage of any person, the name, emblem, endorsement, services, or property of the MRC.
- b. Accept or seek on behalf of himself or any other person, any financial advantage or gain of other than nominal value which may be offered as a result of the volunteer's affiliation with the MRC.
- c. Publicly utilize any MRC affiliation in connection with the promotion of partisan politics, religious matters or positions on any issue not in conformity with the official positions of the Citizen Corps.
- d. Disclose any confidential MRC information that is available solely as a result of the volunteer's affiliation with the MRC to any person not authorized to receive such information, without the express authorization of the MRC.
- e. Knowingly take any action or make any statement intended to influence the conduct of the MRC in such a way as to confer any financial benefit on any person, corporation, or entity in which the individual has a significant interest or affiliation.
- f. Operate or act in any manner that is contrary to the best interests of the MRC.
- g. In the event that the volunteer's obligation to operate in the best interest the MRC conflicts with the interests of any organization in which the individual has a financial interest or an affiliation, the individual shall disclose such conflict to the MRC Coordinator, upon becoming aware of it, shall absent him/her from the room during deliberations on the matter, and shall refrain from participating in any decision or voting in connection with the matter.

Performance

Volunteers are expected to comply with the policies, procedures and standards of the Corps as explained at the beginning of their assignment, at the volunteer orientation and in the volunteer handbook.

If a supervisor is dissatisfied with a MRC volunteer's performance, the first course of action is to communicate that concern to the volunteer. If they are unable to reach an understanding, the Coordinator will resolve the matter. In most cases, a volunteer will be given sufficient time to respond affirmatively or request reassignment to a more suitable placement. In some cases, however, immediate action may be required depending upon the severity of the issue.

For those requiring a license and/or certification to practice, a current license/certification is necessary. Volunteers are responsible to keep these credentials current. The MRC will verify credentials every six months to ensure they are valid.

Those with lapsed or inactive credentials may remain a member if they wish to do so, but will be placed in a non-medical status and not allowed to practice.

If a volunteer loses his or her license due to disciplinary action, his or her MRC membership will be terminated. To be reinstated, if the license is reissued, the volunteer must apply for reinstatement. The MRC Coordinator and MRC Leader will make a determination on reinstatement.

Organizational Structure

The MRC Coordinator reports to the MRC Director in the Department of Emergency Preparedness in Southwest Utah Public Health Department.

A MRC Advisory Committee, comprised of the MRC Director, MRC Coordinator, MRC Liaisons and emergency management agencies advise and assist where needed.

Commitment to Diversity

The MRC is committed to being a diverse organization. It seeks to recognize value and incorporate diversity in its services, policies and operations, service recipients, and volunteer workforce. Diversity includes differences such as age, belief, citizenship, culture, economic level, ethnicity, gender, language, national origin, and philosophy of life, physical ability, physical appearance, race, religion, and sexual orientation.

VOLUNTEER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Volunteer Rights

As a Volunteer/Team Member with the Southwest Utah Medical Reserve Corps (SWUMRC), you enjoy certain rights that should be recognized by your supervisor:

1. An interview and orientation.
2. Given an assignment that utilizes and develops your skills.
3. Adequate information and training to carry out your assignments.
4. Clear and specific directions.
5. Recognition and appreciation for your contribution.
6. The opportunity to offer feedback and ask questions.
7. Regular feedback on your work.
8. Adequate space, equipment and supplies to perform your job.
9. Be respected at all times.

Volunteer Responsibilities

Volunteers expect and enjoy certain rights when they donate their time. Volunteers, however, also have specific responsibilities to the Medical Reserve Corps. As a Volunteer/Team Member, you are free to set your own work schedule, but you must be prepared to fulfill the commitments you make.

1. Be dependable, reliable, and business-like, and abide by the policies of the Corps.
2. Dress appropriately for the setting and the task at hand, no sandals are allowed.
3. Carry out duties in a safe, responsible way.
4. Maintain the confidentiality of information revealed to you regarding clients and co-workers
5. Be non-discriminatory in serving all people regardless of race, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation or disability.
6. Work within the guidelines of your scope of practice and works under the direction of the Medical Director and the MRC protocols.
7. Offer feedback and suggestions
8. Represent the Medical Reserve Corps appropriately in the community.
9. Always perform within your scope of practice. If for any reason you receive an assignment that you can't perform or is outside your scope of practice notify your supervisor immediately.