



## Medical Reserve Corps & Community Emergency Response Team of the



for  
Central NH Public Health Region

*Serving towns of: Alexandria, Ashland, Bristol, Bridgewater, Campton, Ellsworth, Groton, Hebron, Holderness, Lincoln, Livermore (unincorporated), Plymouth, Rumney Thornton, Warren, Waterville Valley, Wentworth, & Woodstock*

# Volunteer Handbook

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# 1 WELCOME LETTER

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Dear Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) / Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteer;

On behalf of the Central NH Public Health Network, welcome and thank you for joining our volunteer teams.

The Central NH Public Health Region covers the Towns of: Alexandria, Ashland, Bristol, Bridgewater, Campton, Ellsworth, Groton, Hebron, Holderness, Lincoln, Plymouth, Rumney Thornton, Warren, Waterville Valley, Wentworth, and Woodstock. Volunteers are needed to donate their time and talents to help local citizens in major emergencies and/or disasters, as well as support local health initiatives. We need volunteers to accomplish these goals. Thank you for making the MRC/CERT part of your life.

This handbook was created to provide you with information that will help maximize your volunteer experience. Please take the time to read through it and refer back to it as questions arise.

Always feel free to contact the MRC/CERT unit for additional information or to pass along suggestions or comments.

Welcome to the Central NH MRC/CERT units!

Sincerely,

Central NH Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator

## 2 ENROLLMENT & ORIENTATION

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Your enrollment and orientation are important first steps to an exciting and rewarding volunteer experience which offers a variety of opportunities to serve your community. The following pages describe the benefits to our volunteers, in addition to 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, please do not hesitate to ask.

Please take the time to read this handbook carefully. Then, sign and return the documents in Appendix B, C, D and E to the MRC office to:

Mailing Address: Mid-State Health Center, Attn: MRC/CERT Director/Coordinator  
101 Boulder Point Drive, Suite 1  
Plymouth, NH 03264

Email Address: [aekestrom@midstatehealth.org](mailto:aekestrom@midstatehealth.org)

Office Phone: (603) 238-3582

We wish you a rewarding experience as a MRC/CERT volunteer.

### 3 HISTORY OF CITIZEN CORPS / MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS

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#### Uniting Communities - Preparing the Nation

In his 2002 State of the Union Message, 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 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.

Sponsored by the Office of the Surgeon General, the Medical Reserve Corps coordinates its efforts with several groups and has multiple affiliates. The MRC is a specialized component of [Citizen Corps](#), a national network of volunteers dedicated to ensuring hometown security. Citizen Corps, along with AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and the Peace Corps are part of the President's [USA Freedom Corps](#), which promotes volunteerism and service throughout our nation.

When possible, MRC units collaborate with their local Citizen Corps Council to better protect, prepare, and serve their communities. Other components of Citizen Corps include the programs: [USA on Watch](#), [Volunteers in Police Service \(VIPS\)](#), [Fire Corps](#), and [Community Emergency Response Team \(CERT\)](#).

The Central NH MRC is proud to be one of the original regional MRC Units in the state of New Hampshire. Our unit has been active in several events, including H1N1 clinics, sheltering operations, and drills and exercises. Our CERT team has been active in sheltering operations, logistical support, and traffic control in our communities.

Our partner organizations throughout the region have the common goal of helping the community prevent, prepare for, and respond to crime, disasters, pressing public health needs, and emergencies of all kinds.

Volunteers are instrumental in making our communities a safer place to live and play. We look forward to working with you in this important community effort.

## 4 MISSION OF CENTRAL NH CERT / MRC

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To work collaboratively with other responder organizations and health providers to plan coordinated volunteer response to public health emergencies within the Central NH Public Health Region (PHR).

### 4.1 VISION STATEMENT

The vision of the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is to enhance regional public health medical and public safety emergency response capability.

### 4.2 BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Major local emergencies can overwhelm the capability of 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, well trained MRC/CERT unit means that volunteers can effectively respond to an emergency, are familiar with their community's response plan, know what materials are available for their use, know who their partners in the response are, and know where their skills can be utilized to their best advantage and in a coordinated manner.

### 4.3 AN ORGANIZED TEAM APPROACH

During an emergency, communities will activate their Local Emergency Operations Plans (LEOP). These plans define how emergency personnel (fire, law enforcement, emergency medical services) will respond to and manage the emergency.

By creating an MRC unit and CERT team that are linked to emergency management, the members of the MRC can truly benefit the community by knowing what their role is during an emergency, how they fit into the emergency plan, and how best to respond so that they are a positive support structure for the first responders.

The MRC, serving our local communities, was formed in 2009, and the CERT unit was formed in 2012. These programs have been integrated into the local emergency management response system as a resource for the local community. The volunteer pool consists of medical and non-medical professionals within and beyond the local towns of Alexandria, Ashland, Bristol, Bridgewater, Campton, Ellsworth, Groton, Hebron, Holderness, Lincoln, Plymouth, Rumney, Thornton, Warren, Waterville Valley, Wentworth, and Woodstock New Hampshire.

Members are predominantly medical professionals who, if they are serving a clinical role, will be covered for liability and Worker's Comp by the State of NH in a declared Public Health Emergency. In the absence of a declaration, Central NH MRC members may be covered by the agency for which they are employed, through an agreement developed by the PHEP Coordinator, as they serve in either a planned event or a non-declared public health emergency.

Although severe storms and flooding have been the cause for most of the area's Major Disaster Declarations, the potential for other disaster types is always present. It is the least expected most unpredictable disasters that can devastate a community. During and after any major disaster, emergency response services are not likely to be able to respond immediately to everyone's needs. It could be several days before vital services are restored. As part of a trained volunteer group, you can be prepared to assist yourself, your family, friends, neighbors, etc.

The MRC/CERT has developed its program by:

- Organizing under the umbrella of the Regional Coordinating Council;
- Recruiting medical and non-medical volunteers from local hospitals, EMS, public health, and the community;
- Creating a database containing all volunteer information, including credentials, contact information, etc;

- Developing orientation, core competencies, and training programs for volunteers; and
- Creating partnerships with Emergency Management, Fire & Police First Responder Organizations, and NH Department of Health and Human Services & Homeland Security and Emergency Management

## 5 REGIONAL COORDINATING COUNCIL

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There is no limit to the number of people that may serve on Central NH's Regional Coordinating Council (R.C.C.) nor are there any term limits. The Committee meets six times per year to evaluate the current status of the unit, offer suggestions and ideas for improvement, and maintain the Strategic Plan, including goals/objectives, vision/mission statements, etc.

### 5.1 LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

Recruitment for the MRC will be community based and managed. The MRC/CERT seek volunteers from various professional and non-professional backgrounds, including medical and non-medical, behavioral health, public health, and support staff. The unit will offer flexibility and allow volunteers to choose their desired level of participation and commitment.

Basic	Participation in Emergency/Disaster activations only. Verification of Credentials required. Completion of BASIC level training needed. (see training section)
Active	Participation in Emergency/Disaster activations and Community Health Initiatives. Verification of Credentials required. Completion of ACTIVE level training needed.
Unit Leader	Participation in Emergency/Disaster activations, Community Health Initiatives, and leadership activities. Attend quarterly meetings. Completion of LEADER level trainings needed.

## 6 INTEGRATION

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The MRC/CERT will be incorporated into the Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP) through the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). All emergency and disaster related functions of the MRC/CERT will be initiated through the EOC or the Regional Multi Agency Coordinating Entity (MACE). The MRC will enhance and improve the emergency medical response capacity in the community. The program will enhance the region's ability to respond to either a natural hazard or a terrorism event and be the designated volunteer corps utilized to provide surge capacity during public health emergencies. For example, responses could include staffing mass vaccination or dispensing clinics, Alternate Care Sites, and/or triage facilities. With advance planning and identification of treatment sites, as well as identifying certified and trained volunteers, a safe, rapid, and effective response will be available in a major emergency or disaster.

## 7 PERSONNEL

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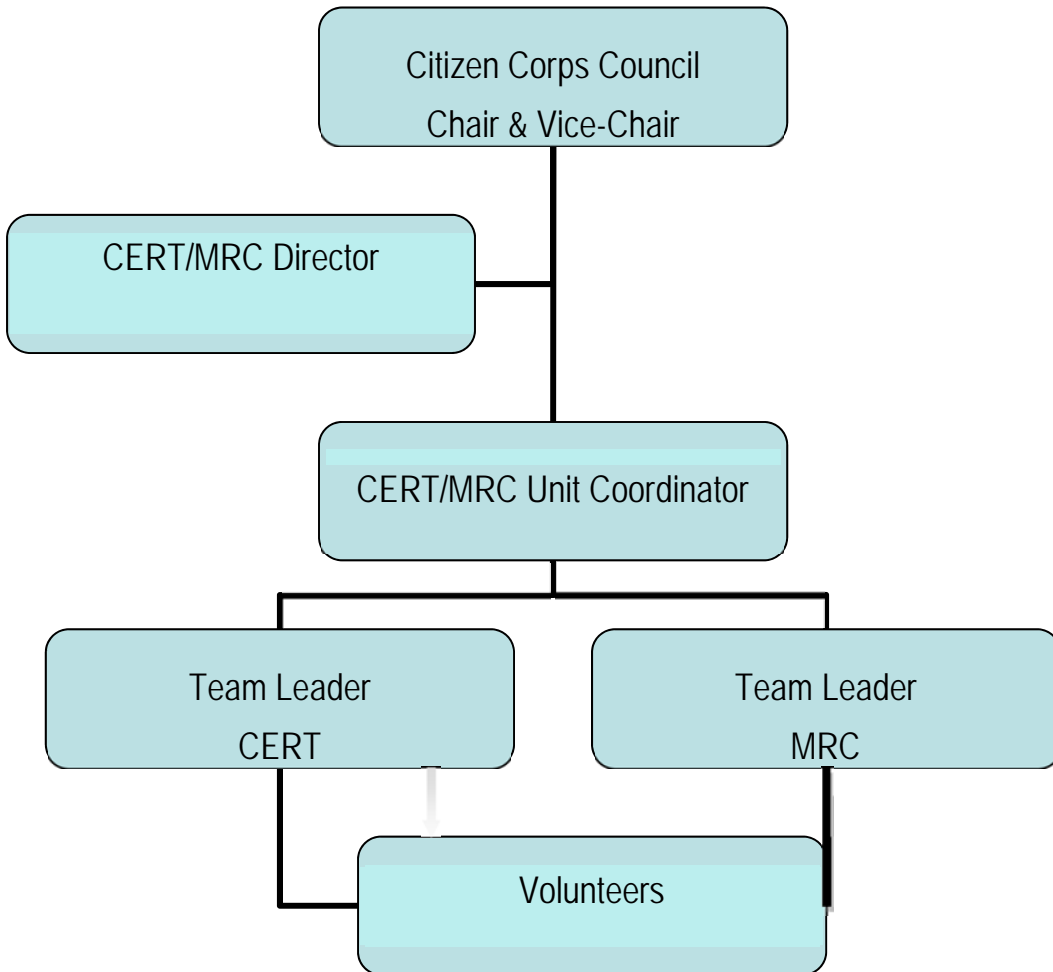
### 7.1 TEAM LEADERS

In order to maintain the most effective and efficient communication network between MRC/CERT staff and the MRC/CERT volunteers, Team Leaders shall be established. Each Team Leader will be assigned a group of volunteers which he/she may be asked to contact during activation, drill, or throughout the year to gather information. Team Leaders are also responsible for conducting team meetings where team members (volunteers) are able to become familiar with each other and the MRC/CERT.





7.2 ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



### **7.3 LENGTH OF SERVICE**

There is no binding agreement regarding a volunteer's length of service with the MRC/CERT. However, because of the investment of time, training, and resources that the MRC/CERT will dedicate to each volunteer, it is hoped that prior to joining, potential volunteers consider whether they will be able to fully participate in the MRC/CERT program and complete the training plan. We encourage volunteers to agree to a two-year commitment.

### **7.4 ASSIGNMENTS**

Assignments will be provided before or during activation. An assignment will outline the general and specific duties that will be expected of the volunteer during a deployment. It should also outline the training requirements needed to carry out assigned duties. If, for any reason, a volunteer does not feel qualified to carry out a specific task, the Team Leader or supervisor should be notified immediately.

Assignments will be based on need, interest, training, and verification of credentials. The MRC/CERT unit will work closely with the local Health Officers, Emergency Managers, and emergency leaders because of their ongoing responsibilities and specific expertise to ensure that volunteers are placed in appropriate roles.

### **7.5 CREDENTIALING**

Volunteer applications will be submitted to the MRC/CERT unit Director/Coordinator for approval and credential verification. Copies of licenses, certifications, etc. are to be provided to the Director/Coordinator in order to complete the application process. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to provide updated license and/or certification information as changes occur.

### **7.6 IDENTIFICATION**

The MRC/CERT unit will issue identification badges to each volunteer. An appointment can be made with the MRC/CERT Director's office to have the picture taken. All volunteers must wear their badges and keep them visible during any activation. Badges remain the property of the MRC/CERT unit and must be returned upon termination of volunteer membership. Volunteer membership may be terminated by either the volunteer or MRC/CERT unit leadership.

### **7.7 VOLUNTEER SAFETY**

All volunteers will receive safety training that is appropriate to their function in the MRC/CERT unit. It is recommended that all volunteers who may be working with patients have current immunizations, including tetanus, influenza, and hepatitis B. Anyone unfamiliar with Blood-borne Pathogens, Personal Protective Equipment, and Fit Testing must be trained in these areas before deployment to a disaster area.

### **7.8 MAINTAINING READINESS**

Regular training exercises are an essential element for ensuring readiness. Being ready to respond in an emergency does not just happen, readiness requires planning, organization, and practice. The MRC/CERT unit will have regular meetings and participate in trainings and local drills to ensure maximum emergency preparedness.

While understanding that time constraints and scheduling conflicts will arise, it is anticipated that MRC/CERT volunteers will follow the basic training plan referred to in this handbook. The trainings are geared specifically to address emergency situations that our volunteers may encounter when responding to either a man-made or natural disaster and are designed to build upon the volunteer's existing expertise. Our local MRC has joined the National MRC in promoting some basic, but essential, core competencies that are critical components to having a trained and ready volunteer team. The State of New Hampshire Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, MRC Coordinator has approved a set of core competencies for all MRC volunteers. Core competencies for the CERT team members have been established by the State of New Hampshire Fire Academy.

Volunteers can be helpful only to the extent that they have prepared their families and homes in advance for emergency situations. Preparedness is each individual's responsibility. Ensuring you are prepared at home and at work will allow you to be ready to respond when you are needed. One of the core trainings we offer is in Personal Preparedness and Family Readiness. Other sources of information on preparedness include your local Public Health Department, Department of Emergency Management, [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov) and [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov). You may also check the website of the Department of Emergency Management, National Medical Reserve Corps, Ready.gov and the CDC for additional emergency preparedness information.

## 8 TRAINING

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Volunteer trainings are recorded in the MRC/CERT database, and will assist in matching volunteers to their assignments/positions. Copies of completion records, certificates, etc. must be forwarded to the Unit Director/Coordinator for proper record keeping.

Under the National MRC structure, three areas known as Core Competencies Domains have been identified in order to build conformity in MRC volunteer training capacity. The three domains are: (1) Health, Safety, and Personal Preparedness; (2) Roles and Responsibilities of Individual Volunteers; and (3) Public Health Activities and Incident Management. Appendix A: Volunteer Tracking Record which outlines the training plan created using these core competencies.

When possible, courses will be held on-site at regular intervals as well as being offered on-line. Notice of scheduled on-site trainings will be emailed to unit volunteers. Most required courses can be accessed using [www.mrc.train.org](http://www.mrc.train.org). Instructions for using this system are in the next section.

### 8.1 HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

If you are unable to commit to volunteer with Central NH MRC or complete the Basic Level training requirements, but wish to be available as a volunteer healthcare professional in the event of a large scale emergency, please see the following:

If you are a doctor or healthcare professional, the New Hampshire Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Healthcare Professionals (ESAR-VHP) is asking for your help. Please visit [www.nhresponds.org](http://www.nhresponds.org) and add your name to the list of volunteer healthcare professionals ESAR-VHP can count on in the event something catastrophic does hit New Hampshire.

### 8.2 TRAINING COURSES - [WWW.MRC.TRAIN.ORG](http://WWW.MRC.TRAIN.ORG)

TRAIN is a learning management system that is a centralized, searchable database of courses, web-based trainings, on-site trainings and conferences; and interconnected network that allows users to access local, state, national, or international training. Users can register online for many courses, create a personal learning record, have access to continuing education credits, and have access to hundreds of public health and emergency preparedness courses from nationally recognized course providers. Learn from your desk with web-based learning, web casts, and satellite broadcasts.

#### 8.2.1 Create an Account:

- Go to [www.mrc.train.org](http://www.mrc.train.org)
- Click "Create Account" underneath "Login". (Username and password are not case sensitive and can be changed at any time after initial login.)
- You will first need to agree to the TRAIN policies before proceeding.
- Fill out all necessary information on the subsequent pages. (Use the "Back" and "Next" buttons at the bottom of the pages and write down your User ID and Password in a secure place).

"My Learning Record" contains the following options:

- My Learning: lists courses you have registered to take.
- My Training Plan: lists courses that your MRC unit has assigned.
- Transcript: lists completed courses.
- Certificates: lists certificates awarded for certain completed courses.
- Course Archive: lists archived courses that were initiated or declined.
- My Account: shows the profile information entered upon registration.

### **8.2.2 Search for Courses:**

If you know the Course ID, you can type it into the Course ID field in the bottom right hand corner of the screen labeled Search by Course ID. Or, click on the "Course Search" option at the top of the screen. Here, several different search options are available. Some allow you to enter your search criteria, while others contain pre-formulated search criteria.

The MRC unit will provide the course name and number of any recommended or required training in order to assist in navigating the system.

### **8.2.3 Registering for courses:**

Once a desired course is located, choose it by clicking on the title. This will open the course description page, where you can learn how to register for that particular course. Some trainings require additional registration outside of the MRC.TRAIN website. Follow the on-screen instructions.

The MRC/CERT unit will hold two trainings each year in the use of the MRC.TRAIN or NHTRAIN tool. Upcoming trainings will be announced to MRC/CERT members.

## **8.3 FUNDING**

The MRC/CERT unit has been awarded small sustainability grants ranging from \$3,000 – \$10,000/yr through National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) as well as through Volunteer N.H. Volunteer time is uncompensated. However, local Departments of Emergency Management and local Public Health Departments are responsible for supplies and other support during a disaster, which may include:

- Education and training
- Protective equipment and clothing
- Supplies (gloves, syringes, splints, etc.)
- Food and shelter
- Communication equipment (two way radios)

## **8.4 LOGO**

The MRC logo is a legally protected service mark and trademark registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and is exclusively held by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. As owner of the MRC marks, logos, and banners, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is legally responsible for protecting its trademark, in all of its various forms and from any intentional and unintentional misuse. Specific prior approval must be obtained in writing for each individual use of the MRC logo by applying to the Medical Reserve Corps.

Anyone who receives permission to use the MRC logo incurs an obligation and fiduciary duty to maintain the integrity and consistency of the logo, marks, or banners. Use of the MRC logo without approval or in an inappropriate manner may result in legal action.

## 8.5 WEB SITES

The MRC/CERT unit is on the web! Go to our web site at [www.greaterplymouthmrc.com](http://www.greaterplymouthmrc.com) for newsletters, trainings, and other important information. This site will keep you updated as to training schedules, events, links, etc. Your friends, colleagues, and family can even apply to be volunteers by printing out and submitting our application form.

## 8.6 BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

All volunteers will be able to access the MRC/CERT unit's bi-monthly newsletter as they become available. This newsletter will keep you up to date on what's happening in the volunteer program.

# 9 PARTICIPATION IN NON-EMERGENCY EVENTS

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MRC/CERT volunteers may be notified, in advance, when a community event may request the need for volunteers. For example, during events such as Old Home Days, triathlons, health fairs, blood drives, etc., the MRC/CERT unit has served logistical support roles. We also may serve local public health departments and schools in providing flu clinics. MRC/CERT volunteers will have the opportunity to decline this type of involvement on their application form, and it will in no way impact their inclusion during an emergency event.

## 9.1 CERT/MRC PROGRAM'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE VOLUNTEER

The MRC/CERT Program will provide free in-person and access to on-line training opportunities for all interested MRC volunteers. The MRC/CERT Program will provide appropriate equipment and supplies as needed for the volunteer, including a MRC/CERT Volunteer Identification Badge and t-shirt.

The MRC/CERT Program will not share volunteers' contact information with outside sources. However, other MRC programs may have access to this information in the event of an emergency for coordination purposes only.

The MRC/CERT Program will strive to provide volunteers with opportunities to work within their own fields of expertise during an emergency event.

# 10 LIABILITY

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## 10.1 THE VOLUNTEER PROTECTION ACT (VPA)

(Codified at 42 U.S.C. § 14501 et. seq.) Provides qualified immunity from liability for volunteers and, subject to exceptions, preempts inconsistent state laws on the subject, except for those that provide protections that are stronger than those contained in the VPA. The VPA defines a volunteer as "an individual performing services for a nonprofit organization or a governmental entity which does not receive compensation" (other than reasonable reimbursement or allowance for expenses actually incurred); or any other thing of value in lieu of compensation, in excess of \$500 per year...." 42 U.S.C. § 14506(6).

Under the VPA, a volunteer of a nonprofit organization or governmental entity is immune from liability for harm caused by an act or omission of the volunteer on behalf of the organization or entity if: (1) the act or omission was within the scope of the volunteer's responsibilities in the organization or entity; (2) if required, the volunteer was properly licensed, certified, or authorized by the appropriate state authorities for the activities or practice giving rise to the claim; (3) 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 (4) the harm was not caused by the volunteer's operation of a motor vehicle, vessel, aircraft, or other vehicle for which the state requires the operator to possess a license or maintain insurance. 42 U.S.C. § 14503(a).

## 10.2 NEW HAMPSHIRE LIABILITY LEGISLATION

New Hampshire HB 618 (providing limited immunity to volunteers mobilized under governmental direction) and New Hampshire RSA 508:17 and 17a, (providing similar immunity to volunteers working without reimbursement in a variety of settings).

# 11 VOLUNTEER RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

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Volunteer Rights - As a volunteer with the CERT/MRC, you enjoy the following rights:

- An interview and orientation;
- Assignments that utilize and develop your skills;
- Adequate information and training to carry out your assignments;
- Clear and specific directions;
- Recognition and appreciation for your contribution;
- Opportunities to offer feedback and ask questions;
- Regular feedback on your work;
- Adequate space, equipment and supplies to perform your job;
- The right to know as much about the organization as possible;
- Respect in your work environment.

## 11.1 CODE OF CONDUCT

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

## 11.2 VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

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

## 11.3 MRC/CERT VOLUNTEERS MUST:

- Be dependable, reliable, and businesslike, and abide by the policies of the MRC/CERT unit;
- Adhere at all times to the National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) Incident Command structure. Deviations from this command control system can have seriously negative effects on the outcome of the response to an event;
- Refrain from activating if using any medical prescription or other drug that has the potential to render them impaired, unfit, or unable to carry out their emergency assignment;
- Refrain from activating if the volunteer has ingested an alcoholic beverage with 12 hours prior to deployment;
- Dress appropriately for the setting and the task at hand, and wear the proper identification badge, shirt, etc. at all events and activations;
- Carry out duties in a safe, responsible way;
- Inform the on-scene authorized official whether they are mentally and physically fit for their assigned duties. CERT/MRC volunteers reporting as not fit for currently assigned duties may request a less demanding assignment that is appropriate to their current capabilities;
- Possess the required liability insurance for any private vehicles, vessels, boats, or aircraft being used in any mission, training event or other authorized activity unless specifically directed otherwise by an authorized official in accordance with current law;
- Maintain the confidentiality of information revealed to you regarding clients and coworkers;

- Keep track of the hours you work on the form provided and submit them to the Team Leader or Program Coordinator;
- Be amenable to serving all people regardless of race, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, or disability;
- Adhere to the guidelines of your job description/scope of practice;
- Check-in and check-out with the appropriate on-scene official when deploying to an incident;
- Offer feedback and suggestions;
- Be prepared for any regularly scheduled meetings;



- Represent the MRC appropriately in the community by knowing the mission of the MRC/CERT unit;
- Not authorize the use of or use for the benefit or advantage of any person, the name, emblem, endorsement, services, or property of CERT/MRC;
- Not accept or seek on behalf of themselves or any other person, any financial advantage or gain of other than nominal value that may be offered because of the volunteer's affiliation with the MRC/CERT
- Not publicly utilize any MRC/CERT 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 MRC/CERT;
- Not knowingly take any action or make any statement intended to influence the conduct of the MRC/CERT 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;
- Not operate or act in any manner that is contrary to the best interests of the MRC/CERT.

## 11.4 PERFORMANCE

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

## 11.5 CONFLICT RESOLUTION

If a Team Leader is dissatisfied with a 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 Unit Director will attempt to 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. The Regional Coordinating Council will be the ultimate deciding body for all matters concerning the MRC/CERT volunteers and organization.

# 12 POLICIES

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## 12.1 APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The process for persons interested in joining the MRC/CERT teams is to complete the application in its entirety submit it. The application can be submitted by making an electronic copy and emailing it to [angelekstrom@midstatehealth.org](mailto:angelekstrom@midstatehealth.org) or mailing it to:

Mid-State Health Center  
 Attn: MRC/CERT Director  
 101 Boulder Point Drive, Suite 1  
 Plymouth, NH 03264.

After reviewing the form for completeness the welcome committee will make phone contact with the applicant to discuss the next steps in the process. Criminal records check will be conducted on each applicant. A review process with the Citizen Corps Council will be convened if the applicant has a criminal background record. It is the policy of the CERT/MRC unit not to accept any applicant with a felony conviction.

## **12.2 HARASSMENT – FREE ENVIRONMENT POLICY**

The MRC/CERT is committed to providing a harassment and discrimination free 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/CERT 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/CERT 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.

If you feel that you may have been the subject of discrimination or harassment, you should contact your Team Leader or Unit Coordinator/Director. Any reports of discrimination or harassment will be examined impartially and resolved promptly. The Regional Coordinating Council will determine the volunteer status of any volunteer found to be verbally or physically inappropriate during an activation, training or meeting of the MRC/CERT.

## **12.3 SAFETY**

A healthy and safe work environment is an important part of the MRC/CERT. No job is considered to be so important or urgent that volunteers cannot take time to perform their job safely. During activations, emergency management will assign a safety officer to oversee operations. The safety officer has the authority to order you to stop an activity. All MRC volunteers are required to fully comply with the directions of the safety officer.

The MRC/CERT unit has a strong partnership with the NH Disaster Behavioral Health Response Team (DBHRT) to provide on-going support services to volunteers pre-event, during event, and post event.

During the job site orientation, a supervisor will discuss all the applicable safety and health rules with you. If you are unclear about any safety policies and procedures, ask the Team Leader or Unit Coordinator/Director.

As a MRC/CERT 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 and/or injuries to your Team Leader.

## **12.4 ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY**

The MRC/CERT unit electronic communication systems, including telephones, handheld two-way radios, email, voice mail, faxes, and Internet, are available to conduct business in a timely manner. All communications are to be professional and appropriate and users are prohibited from using said communications for the solicitations of funds, political messages, harassing messages, or personal use. Furthermore, all electronic data are the property of the local jurisdiction and may be considered public records.

## **12.5 DRUG-FREE WORK ENVIRONMENT**

The MRC/CERT unit is dedicated to a safe, healthy, and drug-free work environment. All volunteers are expected to report to duty free from drug and/or alcohol impairment and to remain in a condition that enables them to perform their job duties in a safe, efficient, legal, and professional manner. Volunteers must abide by the provisions of this policy as a condition of volunteer service.

## **12.6 VIOLENCE-FREE WORK ENVIRONMENT**

The MRC/CERT unit 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/CERT does not tolerate any type of acts or threats of violence committed by or against a volunteer, and therefore prohibit workplace violence. In order to ensure a safe working environment, the CERT/MRC prohibits



all persons from carrying a handgun, firearm, or weapon of any kind during trainings or activations. If a volunteer is threatened while serving as a MRC/CERT volunteer, he/she should immediately report the event to the Incident Commander or nearest person of authority (Team Leader, Supervisor, Safety Officer, Security/Police, etc.).

## 12.7 ACTIVATION POLICY

The MRC/CERT unit can be fully or partially activated upon:

- A declaration by the governor of New Hampshire indicating that there is a state of emergency, public health or otherwise.
- A declaration by local elected officials
- CERT/MRC unit request by the local emergency management director(s) or MACE team manager(s)

As a local emergency support resource, the MRC/CERT unit may be activated by:

- Local government elected officials, officials responsible for emergency management or public health, or their designated representatives
- Local or State Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
- In the event of a national deployment request, the request will be from the US Department of Health and Human Services

## 12.8 ACTIVATION/NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE

Requests for volunteer assistance will be processed through the Coordinator/Director or the designated Emergency Management Director. The requesting agency will contact the MRC/CERT Director/Coordinator to notify them of the request for assistance from the MRC/CERT unit. Contact information should be supplied so that the requestor may be reached for follow-up. The Coordinator and/or Director shall then notify Grafton County Sheriff Dispatch at 787-2111 with a notification message. The MRC Coordinator will contact the original requestor for follow-up.

Local officials requesting the activation of the MRC/CERT must provide the following information to the Director or his/her designee:

- The nature and scope of the emergency
- The location of the emergency
- The estimated number of patients and their injuries
- The staging area(s) or location(s) to which the Medical Reserve Corps unit is being deployed
- Specific medical skills and/or resources needed, i.e., physicians, nurses, etc
- Contact information, including phone number and/or radio frequency of person requesting resources as well as whom the volunteers report to at the responding location

If the MRC/CERT unit Director confirms that the assignment is appropriate, the activation process will commence.

In the event of a public health or medical emergency, MRC/CERT volunteers and /or the duty MACE manager will initially be notified via e-mail, telephone, or another available and appropriate means of communication. Depending on the situation, members will be informed of the nature of the emergency and may be instructed to report to designated areas. Response to volunteer notification will be tracked by the MRC/CERT unit Director and/or their designee.

## 12.9 DEPLOYMENT POLICY

Emergent Management Directors may request deployment by contacting the unit Director and/or Coordinator, who shall then follow the activation/notification procedure. Members should never self-deploy. Doing so could be grounds for dismissal. No unauthorized person

or agency can deploy individual MRC/CERT members directly. It is crucial to work strictly through the Director or their designee for deployment requests for several reasons. This method of having a single point of contact ensures that:

- The call-out request is appropriate for the unit
- Notifications are made through the most effective channels
- Responses from members are tracked efficiently, with no duplication
- The appropriate number and type of volunteers are dispatched.
- Members can be assigned at their optimum skill level and preferences
- Teams of various specialties can be allocated as needed
- Groups of members who trained together can offer maximum effectiveness
- Resources are allocated wisely in the event of multiple requests
- Members are provided with the relevant background and directions
- Responders will arrive with the appropriate training and equipment
- Member safety is ensured to the greatest degree possible
- Activities of responders can be monitored, across multiple events
- After-action reporting and feedback mechanisms are maintained
- Follow-ups are initiated as appropriate

Self-deployment, and the contacting of individual members apart from established channels, interferes with these desired outcomes. In the event that unaffiliated community volunteers respond to the scene to help, they will be directed to the volunteer reception area to be managed effectively according to the Incident Action Plan and/or Incident Commander's instructions.

## 12.10 DEPLOYMENT PROCEDURE

### *12.10.1.1 Emergency Events*

If available and most appropriate, an e-mail message will be forwarded to MRC/CERT volunteers. The message should include an activation message (not to be mistaken as a drill/exercise message) and the request for a response regarding availability via e-mail, or most appropriate means. These responses will be tracked. After two hours or when appropriate, a call tree will be initiated. The MRC Director and/or designee will call the Team Leaders with the necessary information, and the Team Leaders will call their team members. Responses should follow the same channels of communication: team members responding to Team Leaders, and Team Leaders responding to the Director and/or designee.

### *12.10.1.2 Non-Emergency Events*

Health Initiatives/Training Opportunities

Health Initiatives include: Health Fairs, First Aid Booths, Clinics, etc.

Training Opportunities include: Presentations, Conferences, Drills, Exercises, etc.

An e-mail message regarding the event or opportunity will be forwarded to all active MRC/CERT unit volunteers. Interested volunteers will be asked to respond to the appropriate person, which may be the CERT/MRC office or an outside affiliate (Citizen Corps, DHHS, Emergency Management, Red Cross, etc.). If an outside affiliate, it is the responsibility of the volunteer to keep track of time and certificates awarded and forward this information to the MRC/CERT Director for record keeping purposes.

## 12.11 DEMOBILIZATION & DEBRIEFING

The MRC/CERT unit will support emergency medical, public health or hospital operations for the duration of an incident or as long as their assistance is required. It is possible that some unit personnel and resources may be demobilized before others as their

assignments are completed. Unit members will demobilize along with other on-scene personnel and resources, in accordance with the Incident Action Plan and/or the Incident Commander's instructions.

When demobilizing, volunteers should ensure the following actions are accomplished:

- Ensure all assigned activities are completed.
- Account for equipment.
- Clean up any debris or trash associated with assignments.
- Determine whether additional assistance is required.
- Notify the Incident Commander (or similar hospital or public health agency official if operating within those settings) when departing the site.

Each incident should include assurance that members have signed out from the scene and have the chance to share their observations afterwards. These comments can be included in an after-action report and can be shared as needed (with the volunteer's name removed for confidentiality, if appropriate) in overall post-event reviews with other agencies. Opportunities will be made available to meet with mental health professionals, if deployments warrant the need.

A demobilization or stand down notice will be e-mailed to all volunteers who were contacted with the initial notification of activation or subsequent messages.

# 13 APPENDIXES

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## 13.1 APPENDIX A – RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK

I have received a copy of the MRC/CERT Unit Handbook. I have read and understood the policies and information in it and agree to abide by these policies during my volunteer term.

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Signature

Date

## 13.2 APPENDIX B – CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

Due to the nature of services of the MRC/CERT unit, you may process information that is confidential and not public record. For that reason you are asked to sign a confidentiality statement indicating that you will keep information to which you have access confidential and not discuss it with anyone other than the staff person with whom you are working.

### CONFIDENTIALITY PLEDGE

I realize that, as a volunteer with the MRC/CERT unit, I may acquire knowledge of confidential information from files, case records, missions, conversations, etc. I agree that such information is not to be discussed or revealed to anyone not authorized to have the information

I, \_\_\_\_\_ certify that I have read the above statement and agree to comply with the terms.

---

Signature

Date

### 13.3 APPENDIX C– RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION OF PHOTOGRAPHS / VIDEO RECORDINGS

I certify that I am over 18 years of age and I hereby grant to the MRC/CERT unit the irrevocable and unrestricted right to edit, duplicate, exhibit, broadcast, copyright, use and publish photographs and/or video recordings of me, or in which I may be included, for any purpose and in any manner or medium. I hereby waive and release the MRC/CERT unit, its officials, officers, agents, and employees from any and all rights, claims, and liability I may have relating to said photographs and video recordings. I understand that I will not receive compensation from the MRC/CERT unit for said photographs and video recordings.

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 13.4 APPENDIX D – RETURNING PROVIDED EQUIPMENT

I understand that all property and/or equipment provided to me as a volunteer with the CERT/ MRC Unit is the sole property of said unit. As such, I agree to return any and all property assigned to me during my tenure as a volunteer.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Witnessed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

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

## 13.5 APPENDIX E – VOLUNTEER TRACKING RECORD

Volunteer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Member Enrollment		
Complete	Description	Resource
<input type="checkbox"/>	Application received	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Receipt of Handbook form received signed	Handbook - Appendix A
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confidentiality Statement received signed	Handbook – Appendix B
<input type="checkbox"/>	Release for Publication of Photographs / Video Recordings received signed	Handbook – Appendix C
<input type="checkbox"/>	Returning Provided Equipment received signed	Handbook – Appendix D
<input type="checkbox"/>	Background check paperwork received	NH Emergency Services Unit (ESU), at 129 Pleasant Street, Concord
<input type="checkbox"/>	Registered in NH Responds	<a href="https://www.nhresponds.org/">https://www.nhresponds.org/</a>

### Orientation / **Basic** Level Training Requirements

(to be completed within one year)

Complete	Training	Resource
<input type="checkbox"/>	FEMA IS-100b: Incident Command Systems	<a href="https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-100.b">https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-100.b</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	FEMA IS-700a: National Incident Management System	<a href="https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-700.a">https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-700.a</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Basic Training: CERT / MRC 101	Central NH Training Resource Manual
<input type="checkbox"/>	CPR	American Red Cross <u>or</u> American Heart Association
<input type="checkbox"/>	First Aid	American Red Cross <u>or</u> American Heart Association
<input type="checkbox"/>	Traffic Control & Radio Readiness	Central NH Training Resource Manual

### Active Level Training Requirements

(Prerequisite – Basic Level Trainings Completed)

Complete	Training	Resource
<input type="checkbox"/>	Behavioral Health (Psychological First Aid)	Central NH Training Resource Manual
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheltering	Central NH Training Resource Manual

## Leader Level Training Requirements

(Prerequisite – Basic & Active Level Trainings Completed)

Complete	Training	Resource
<input type="checkbox"/>	FEMA IS 200: ICS for Single Resources & Initial Action Incidents	<a href="https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-200.b">https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-200.b</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	FEMA IS 800: National Response Framework, An Introduction	<a href="https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-800.b">https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-800.b</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	SNS / POD 101	

## Other Trainings

Complete	Training	Resource
<input type="checkbox"/>	FEMA IS-317: Introduction to Community Emergency Response Teams	<a href="https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-317">https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-317</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	FEMA IS-909: Community Preparedness: Implementing Simple Activities for Everyone	<a href="https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-909">https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-909</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	WebEOC (Emergency Operations Center on the Web)	Central NH Training Resource Manual
<input type="checkbox"/>	Infection Control / Bloodborne Pathogens	
<input type="checkbox"/>	IRMS: NH's (Integrated Resource Management System)	<a href="http://irms.nh.gov/patientTracking/Security/Signin.aspx">http://irms.nh.gov/patientTracking/Security/Signin.aspx</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Amateur Disaster Communications	Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Animal First Aid	Central NH Training Resource Manual
<input type="checkbox"/>	Map & Compass Reading	Central NH Training Resource Manual
<input type="checkbox"/>	Search & Rescue	NH Fish & Game
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fire Extinguisher Use	Central NH Training Resource Manual
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mental Health First Aid	Genesis / Central NH Training Resource Manual
<input type="checkbox"/>	Compassion Fatigue	
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		

## 13.6 APPENDIX F – RECOMMENDED DEPLOYMENT EQUIPMENT

When you are notified to report to a local incident site, you should be prepared to be on site for at least 12 hours, just in case. Therefore the following are some recommended items you may want to bring with you to make your time volunteering more comfortable:

Security Items:

- CERT/MRC Identification Badge
- (1) Additional form of picture ID

Clothing: (\*It's important to be prepared for both indoor and outdoor working conditions)

- CERT/MRC T-shirt
- Comfortable, light-weight clothing (Think Layers!)
- Long pants
- Long-sleeved shirts
- Hat
- Boots or comfortable walking shoe
- Warm jacket
- Rain gear
- Bandana/handkerchief
- Gloves (Leather gloves if physical labor will be performed or for warmth)
- Personal Items:
  - Cell Phone
  - Sunglasses
- Nonperishable Snack
- Water bottle
- Sunblock
- Lip balm
- Contact lenses, lens cleaner, and eye glasses protective case
- Anything else you would need in a 12-hour period, such as medications, etc.