



Central Nebraska
Medical Reserve Corps
Handbook

February 2008

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Welcome



Dear Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer,

On behalf of the Medical Reserve Corps Advisory Council, welcome and thank you for joining our volunteer team.

In the Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps, we have volunteers willing to donate their time and talents to help local citizens during major emergencies and/or disasters. To accomplish all of our goals, we need you to volunteer. Our sincere thanks to you for making the Medical Reserve Corps part of your volunteer activities.

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

Always feel free to call the Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator, Shelly Boden for additional information or comments. Shelly can be reached at (402) 461-2360 or sboden@acema.org

Once again, welcome to the Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps!

Sincerely,

Shelly Boden

Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator

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 us at (402) 461-2360 or sboden@acema.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.

We wish you a rewarding experience as a Medical Reserve Corps volunteer.



History of Citizen Corps/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 will bring together local health professionals and others with relevant health related 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.

Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps is proud to be an active Medical Reserve Corps in the state of Nebraska, and 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.

Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps

Mission of the Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps

Our mission is to recruit, organize, train and prepare medical professionals to serve and assist core delivery in urgent and emergent situations. The MRC will support and assist local, regional and national entities in delivering and maintaining vital health care services.

Vision Statement

Our vision is to provide expert medical assistance, advice, support and service when ever called upon to do so.

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 and well trained MRC unit translates into volunteers, who can effectively respond to an emergency, are familiar with their 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.

An Organized Approach

The Medical Reserve Corps can be activated by Health Departments, Emergency Managers, or Mayors of communities. Once the MRC has been activated members will be called and asked to report to a Volunteer Reception Center (VRC). These are predetermined sites that will be opened based on the type and location of the emergency.

When you check into the VRC, you will give them your name and you will be directed to pick up your credentials. 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. The VRC will call your assignment and let them know you are coming. After your assignment is complete you will return to the VRC location to 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

Each applicant with the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) will have references checked, licenses verified, and a police background check. Once those have been completed each volunteer will have an interview and a picture taken for their credentials. Badges will not be issued until the disaster to ensure accountability of the credentialing.

Volunteer Safety

All volunteers before being deployed will receive safety training that is appropriate to their function in the MRC and the disaster/emergency in the community.

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.

Training

Training requirements that must be completed before you will be deployed is as follows; you must be current in your Blood borne Pathogen Training, CPR, and First Aid, and NIMS 100, 200 & 700. These classes are offered twice a year if you do not already have the certifications. If you have these certifications, please send a copy of each to Shelly Boden at (402)461-2360 or fax (402) 461-2367 or mail to 1313 N. Hastings, Hastings NE 68901.

All members are expected to attend the Annual Training so they can learn the latest information available.

In addition there will be free training available on MRC-TRAIN which is encouraged.

Funding

Volunteer time is uncompensated. The Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps has received a grant through the Tri-cities Medical Response to help pay for training, equipment and recruiting. The Central Nebraska MRC is continually looking for funds to maintain and sustain the Corps training and equipment needs.

Each member deployed will receive a “Go Bag” with the following:

- MRC Vest
- MRC Backpack
- MRC Color coded cap
- Non-Latex Gloves
- Lantern Flashlight
- Blood Pressure Kit
- Standard Stethoscope
- Utility Scissors
- Level C PPE
- N-95 respirators
- Pocket Mask

For MRC going into the field we have Basic trauma management kits, ALS Airway Kits, and Oxygen Kits. The MRC equipment will be checked and maintained. All MRC volunteers are required to use universal precautions on all patients.

Recognition

As an MRC member, you will be invited to attend a special recognition during National Volunteer Week. We will be honoring an outstanding Medical Reserve Corps member and honoring the businesses that help us to be disaster prepared.

Our Emblem

The Medical Reserve Corps emblem is a recognized emblem that must be used in a standard form. These guidelines include color, placement, font and size. Correspondence requires certain placement of margins and addresses. Before placing the MRC emblem, please check with Shelly Boden at (402) 461-2360.

Web Site

The Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps is on the web! Visit us at <http://www.nomedicalresponse.com>

This site will keep you updated on training schedules, events, etc. Your friends, colleagues, and family can even apply to be volunteers by downloading an application.

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.

Newsletter

All volunteers will be able to access a web based quarterly newsletter “The Central Nebraska MRC Happenings”, from the website. If you do not have internet access, please contact Shelly Boden at (402) 461-2360 or sboden@acema.org and it will be mailed to you. This newsletter will keep you current on what’s happening.

The newsletter will have statistics, volunteer profiles, new volunteer opportunities and upcoming events.

National Incident Management Systems (NIMS)

The Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps will operate in all emergencies and disasters using NIMS. 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 Incident Commander will have direct control of tactical resources.

When activating an Operations Section, the Incident Commander 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 Incident Command Post 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 Incident Command System 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 Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) 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 Medical Reserve Corps. No job is considered so important or urgent that volunteers cannot take time to perform their job safety utilizing 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.

Cell Phones

When carrying a cell phone during training or operation, please keep it on vibrate or silent. If you must take answer a call or make a call, please have your position covered and step outside of the training/work area.

Drug Free Workplace

The Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) 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 Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) 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, Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps 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 Medical Reserve Corps 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: *Medical Reserve Coordinator* **Alternate contact:** TRIMRS Chairman

Code of Conduct

Introduction

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 Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps 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 Medical Reserve Corps.
- 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 of 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, the individual shall absent himself/herself 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.

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 with the Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) you enjoy certain rights that should be recognized by your supervisor and staff at your placement agency. These rights are:

1. An interview and orientation.
2. Assignments 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. The right to know as much about the organization as possible.
10. Be respectful 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, you are free to set your own work schedule, but you must be prepared to fulfill the commitments you make. You are always able to say NO. You must:

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 tennis shoes or sandals are allowed.
3. Carry out duties in a safe and responsible way.
4. Maintain the confidentiality of information regarding clients and co-workers.
5. Be non-discriminatory 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.

Confidentiality

Due to the nature of services that the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) provides, you may process information that is confidential and not public record. For that reason you are asked to sign this confidentiality statement.

CONFIDENTIALITY PLEDGE

I, _____ certify that I have read the statement below and agree to comply with the terms.

I realize that as a Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps member, 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.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Photography Consent

The Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps frequently takes photographs of volunteers in action during trainings, exercises, and actual events. In addition, each volunteer is photographed for identification purposes. Photographs may be used on the website, in newsletters, and other publications.

Please sign the appropriate line below:

I give the Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps permission to use my photo as stated above.

Signature

Date

I do not give Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps permission to use my photo as stated above.

Signature

Date

NOTES

Receipt of Handbook

I have received a copy of the Central Nebraska Medical Reserve Corps handbook. I have read and understand the policies and information in it and agree to abide by these policies during my volunteer term.

Signature

Date