Weber-Morgan Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer Handbook

Section I
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Welcome to the Weber-Morgan County Medical Reserve Corps – we’re glad to have you join our team. This handbook is designed to provide you with an introduction to the Weber-Morgan County Medical Reserve Corps (WMMRC), including what to expect from the group and what is expected of you.

Your decision to join is a great contribution to the welfare of others. We hope that your membership will be a rewarding experience. You are to be commended for your willingness to give of your time and efforts in the protection and care of the ill and injured.

As with most volunteer organizations, Weber-Morgan County Medical Reserve Corps depends on its membership for its success – the organization is the sum of its membership’s efforts and contributions. For the group to succeed and prosper, its members must have a sense of commitment and dedication to the purpose of the organization, which is to help others in distress.

Weber-Morgan County Medical Reserve Corps is dedicated to helping the community. Our mission is to help where assistance is needed, without regard for personal convenience. Our organization places a strong emphasis on serving.

This handbook will guide you in your general functions within the group. It is broken down into the following sections:

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   b. Introduction and Overview of the MRC
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As a responsible organization, we must maintain uniformity in members. Contact with the public, and this guide will assist you in meeting the necessary standards. A volunteer should have a thorough knowledge of Weber-Morgan County Medical Reserve Corps and a commitment to this group’s mission and values. By understanding and appreciating the Weber-Morgan County Medical Reserve Corps policies and values, you will be better able to contribute in an effective and meaningful manner. Please read this handbook carefully and keep it handy for future reference. Again, welcome to the team and thanks for your willingness to serve.
Dear Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer,

On behalf of the Weber-Morgan Health Department (WMHD) and the Weber-Morgan Medical Reserve Corps (WMMRC), we welcome and thank you for joining our volunteer team.

WMMRC serves the Weber and Morgan Counties of Utah. Our goal is to use the talents and strengths within each of our communities to strengthen and better prepare for an emergency. We work out of and are sponsored by WMHD. Thank you for making the Medical Reserve Corps part of your volunteer activities.

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

For additional information or to pass along suggestions or comments, contact the WMMRC Coordinator. Bryce Sherwood can be reached at 801-399-7121 or by email at bsherwood@co.weber.ut.us.

Sincerely,

Gary House
Weber-Morgan Health Department
Health Officer

ABOUT THIS BOOK

The information in this handbook is extensive but not complete. You will learn much of the information regarding your responsibilities as you attend training or respond as a volunteer.

Please take time to read this handbook. Keep it as a reference to use when you have questions or concerns. If you have any questions along the way, contact Bryce Sherwood at 801-399-7121 or by email at bsherwood@co.weber.ut.us.

We wish you a rewarding experience as a volunteer with the Weber-Morgan Medical Reserve Corps!
INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE MRC

The Medical Reserve Corps, or MRC, was founded after President Bush’s 2002 State of the Union Address, in which he asked all Americans to volunteer in support of their country. At that time, 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 Medical Reserve Corps (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 all part of the President’s Freedom Corps, which promotes volunteerism and service throughout the nation.

People volunteer for many reasons, but some volunteer for the MRC for reasons which may include but are not limited to:

- Becoming adequately prepared to offer your skills to their community’s response efforts. As a member of a formal MRC, your skills and efforts will be better utilized.
- Providing benefits to communities. Skilled volunteers may offer services to augment existing public health efforts or to provide emergency backup to existing resources.
- Belonging to a group of like-minded individuals with a strong sense of mission and purpose.
- Qualifying for special incentives (e.g., free training).

Volunteers are the heart of the MRC. The existence of this nationwide, community-based movement is due to the willingness of volunteer medical and public health professionals to serve their communities in times of need. Without that generous offer of volunteer service, there would be no MRC.

MRC CORE COMPETENCIES

WMMRC encourages all volunteers and administrative staff to know and understand the MRC Core Competencies. These were described in Section I of this handbook.

You may already know how to perform some of the medical and health functions we so desperately need. In most cases, your training as an MRC volunteer will focus primarily on learning your local emergency and health procedures, trauma response techniques, use of specialized equipment, and other methods to enhance your effectiveness as a volunteer.

The MRC Core Competencies represent the baseline level of knowledge and skills that all members should have, regardless of their roles within an MRC unit. Utilizing the Competencies makes interoperations between MRC units more efficient by providing a “common language” in which units can communicate their members’ capacities to each other and to partner organizations. The Competencies are as follows:
**Competency 1** - Describe the procedures and steps necessary for the MRC member to protect health, safety, and overall well-being of themselves, their families, the team, and the community.

**Competency 2** - Describe the impact of an event on the mental health of the MRC member and their family, team, and others.

**Competency 3** - Describe the MRC member’s communication role(s) and processes with response partners, media, general public, and others.

**Competency 4** - Demonstrate the MRC member’s ability to follow procedures for assignment, activation, reporting, and deactivation.

**Competency 5** - Identify limits to own skills, knowledge, and abilities as they pertain to MRC role(s).

**Competency 6** - Describe the chain of command (e.g., Emergency Management System, ICS, NIMS), the integration of the MRC, and its application to given incident.

**Competency 7** - Describe the role of the local MRC unit in public health and/or emergency response and its application to a given incident.

Because the Core Competencies establish only a minimum standard, members may choose to expand on them in order to train at a more advanced level. Further information about the Competencies, including additional training options, can be found in Attachment A entitled “MRC Core Competency Matrix” or on the national MRC website: [http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/](http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/).

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**MISSION AND GOAL**

The mission of the Weber-Morgan Medical Reserve Corps is “to organize and retain a volunteer force of medical and non-medical personnel for the purpose of community preparedness in the event of a disaster or public health threat.”

The Medical Reserve Corps was created to assist the local community during a public health emergency by providing rapid, coordinated and specific response using locally recruited and trained medical and non-medical volunteers.

The role of a local MRC is not to replace existing emergency response systems, but rather, to supplement these systems during emergency situations which affect public health.
ABOUT THE WEBER-MORGAN MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS

The Weber-Morgan Medical Reserve Corps Medical Reserve Corps (WMMRC) was officially registered with the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General in November, 2004. It is a volunteer-based organization that relies on its volunteers to provide the needed infrastructure and personnel required to respond to an emergency. Volunteers may be needed to fill emergency response roles, such as Point-of-Dispensing (POD) clinic personnel, and ongoing administrative and planning roles to ensure that the WMMRC will always be prepared to respond in an emergency situation.

While the services performed by different MRC groups around the nation may vary, WMMRC and many other groups across the nation have agreed to support three critical Public Health and Homeland Security issues:

- Ensuring medical surge capacity, or the ability to increase the medical workforce during disasters
- Supporting the deployment and dispensing of medications received from the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) through Point-of-Dispensing clinics, or PODs. Volunteers may be a critical element in staffing these clinics during a disaster
- WMMRC members may be requested to assist with hospital and/or clinics.

In addition, WMMRC has a commitment to assistance in special events and other incidents such as firefighter/police/FBI support. Specialized teams within the WMMRC are set up to provide this support.

BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Our MRC unit is made up of medical and support volunteers who can assist our community during an emergency. Major local emergencies can quickly 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.

INVITATION

Weber-Morgan Medical Reserve Corps needs volunteers with a variety of backgrounds and experience to assist WMMRC to fulfill their mission. We encourage volunteers, both medical and non-medical, to submit applications to join our team. If you know anyone who would be interested in participating as a member of WMMRC, please invite them to learn more by going to our website at www.webermorganhealth.org. Potential applicants may print and mail the application form and policies to our office. The preferable method, however, would be for the applicant to submit the application securely on-line. Upon request, the WMMRC Coordinator will mail or fax the application form and policies. All applicants will be required to register on the “Utah Responds” State Registry for Volunteers at https://www.utahresponds.org.
July 2008

Dear MRC Coordinators,

The U.S. Surgeon General has set forth four major priorities for the health of individuals and the nation. The Priorities create a foundation for activities that the Medical Reserve Corps can participate in. The National Program Office has created a workgroup to assist local units in generating ideas and methods for implementing the Surgeon General’s Priorities. This workgroup is currently meeting via conference calls to assist local unit leaders with these priorities.

The priorities are as follows:

1) Increase Disease Prevention
2) Eliminate Health Disparities
3) Public Health Preparedness
4) Improve Health Literacy

The four Priorities provide our MRC units with specific areas to target that will strengthen public health in our communities. Below you will find a description of the four priorities. The Surgeon General’s Workgroup will generate ideas for each throughout the upcoming year. Please check the two-way list serve for ideas about events that you can have in your local communities.

1) Educating the public on how to prevent disease is strongly encouraged. With 7 out of 10 Americans dying each year of a preventable chronic disease, it’s imperative to address problems like obesity, HIV/AIDS, tobacco use, birth defects, injuries and low physical activity. By involving your volunteer teams in activities such as diabetes screenings and exercise programs, MRC units can promote this priority. One thing we can do as a MRC Unit is set an example for our families and colleagues by eating healthy and exercising regularly.

2) The goal of eliminating health disparities is to rid minority communities of the greater burden of death and disease from illnesses such as breast cancer, prostate cancer, cervical cancer, cardiovascular disease and others. All Americans—regardless of race, heritage, or gender—need access to good healthcare, information, and insurance. In support of this priority, MRC units can increase public awareness of health disparities through programs such as Take a Loved One for a Checkup Day. Additionally, MRC units can support efforts such as health fairs, blood pressure screenings, and immunization clinics.
3) Public health emergency preparedness is a special concern because Americans count on a strong public health system capable of meeting any emergency be it man-made, weather-related, or an emerging infectious illness. **MRC volunteers are a crucial resource in our public health system and developing partnerships between the MRC and law enforcement, public health, and public safety agencies at all levels of government is an important step in allowing every community to better respond to emergencies.** MRC teams can partner, prepare and practice for emergencies with local OEM, CERT teams, Red Cross, VOAD/COAD groups, hospitals, school nurses, and other health departments and healthcare facilities. By doing this, we are strengthening the public health infrastructure in our local communities. As our MRC volunteers participate in local efforts to educate the public about emergency preparedness, we are helping our community be prepared.

4) Improving health literacy of all Americans is essential because it involves the ability of an individual to access, understand and use health-related information and services to make appropriate health decisions. Increasing awareness within the medical community and among the general public about the importance of health literacy and the challenges presented by low health literacy is an activity that MRC can assist with in conjunction with our public health partners.

Because the MRC Program is based in the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General, we are truly in a great position to promote these four priorities for public health and simultaneously strengthen the health of the nation—one community at a time.