Alexandria Medical Reserve Corps

Volunteer Handbook

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Contents

WELCOME

We are pleased that you have chosen to join the Alexandria Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). On behalf of the Alexandria MRC, we welcome and thank you for joining our team! This *Volunteer Handbook* provides the reader with information about the background, mission, policies and procedures of the Alexandria MRC. It is reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

1. Establishes administrative, logistical, and operational policies and procedures for the effective operation of the Alexandria MRC program.

2. Provides guidance to Alexandria MRC volunteers on MRC core competencies and available training opportunities to help volunteers meet these competencies.

3. Describes the process to activate the unit, and utilize its personnel and resources for public health emergency operations and public health activities.

4. Enhances the community's knowledge of the Alexandria MRC program, including our background, mission, and opportunities to volunteer.

ACRONYMS

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ASPR	Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response
CERT	Community Emergency Response Team
DHS	US Department of Homeland Security
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
HHS	US Department of Health & Human Services
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
ICS	Incident Command System
MRC	Medical Reserve Corps
NIMS	National Incident Management System
OEM	Office of Emergency Management
PHEM	Public Health Emergency Management
PIO	Public Information Officer
POD	Point of Dispensing
VDH	Virginia Department of Health
VVHS	Virginia Volunteer Health System

MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS OVERVIEW

WHY WAS THE MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS CREATED?

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks highlighted the need for trained medical and public health personnel to assist with emergency operations. Many medical and public health professionals sought to support emergency relief efforts after 9/11, but there was no organized approach to channel their efforts. Since 2002, the national MRC program has provided the structure to pre-identify, train, credential, and deploy medical and public health personnel in response to public health emergencies. Today there are about 935 MRC units, with more than 200,000 volunteers, that make up the national MRC network. MRC units are present in all 50 states, D.C., Guam, Palau, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

WHO DIRECTS THE MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS?

The MRC Program is guided by local, state, regional, and national directives, each with key personnel responsible for managing specific activities. The national MRC Program is housed within the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) and supports state MRC networks and local units through regional networks.

Regional Liaisons function as a clearinghouse for information and best practices to help communities establish, implement, and maintain MRC units. They provide technical assistance, strategy and policy development, grants and contract oversight, and training and other services to local and state MRC coordinators. The Commonwealth of Virginia, and Alexandria MRC, is part of HHS Region III, which includes DC, DE, MD, PA, and WV.
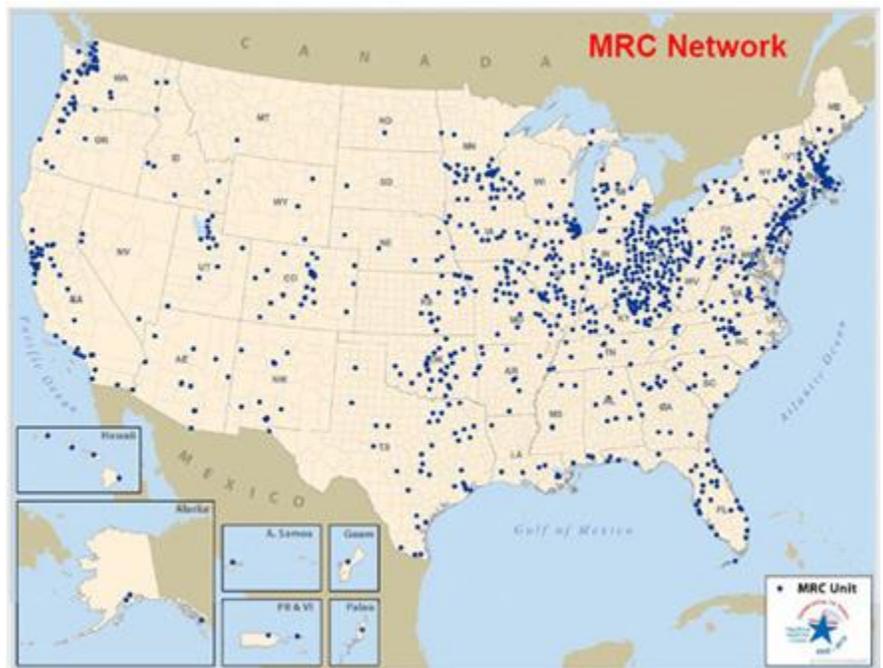
In Virginia, there are 27 local MRC units that make up the Commonwealth's MRC network. The State Volunteer Coordinator works within the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Office of Emergency Preparedness and is responsible for the coordination of the Virginia MRC network, with includes Alexandria MRC. The State Volunteer Coordinator also provides technical support to local unit coordinators, administers the Virginia Volunteer Health System (VVHS), manages grants, and promotes the Virginia MRC program statewide.

Alexandria's local MRC unit is under the direction of the Alexandria Health Department (AHD) and VDH. Our unit is led by an MRC Coordinator, who matches community needs for public health emergency response and public health initiatives with MRC volunteer capabilities.

Local MRC units are the core of the national MRC network that support our nation's public health emergency response infrastructure. MRC units are largely managed at the local level so they can meet the unique needs of local communities.
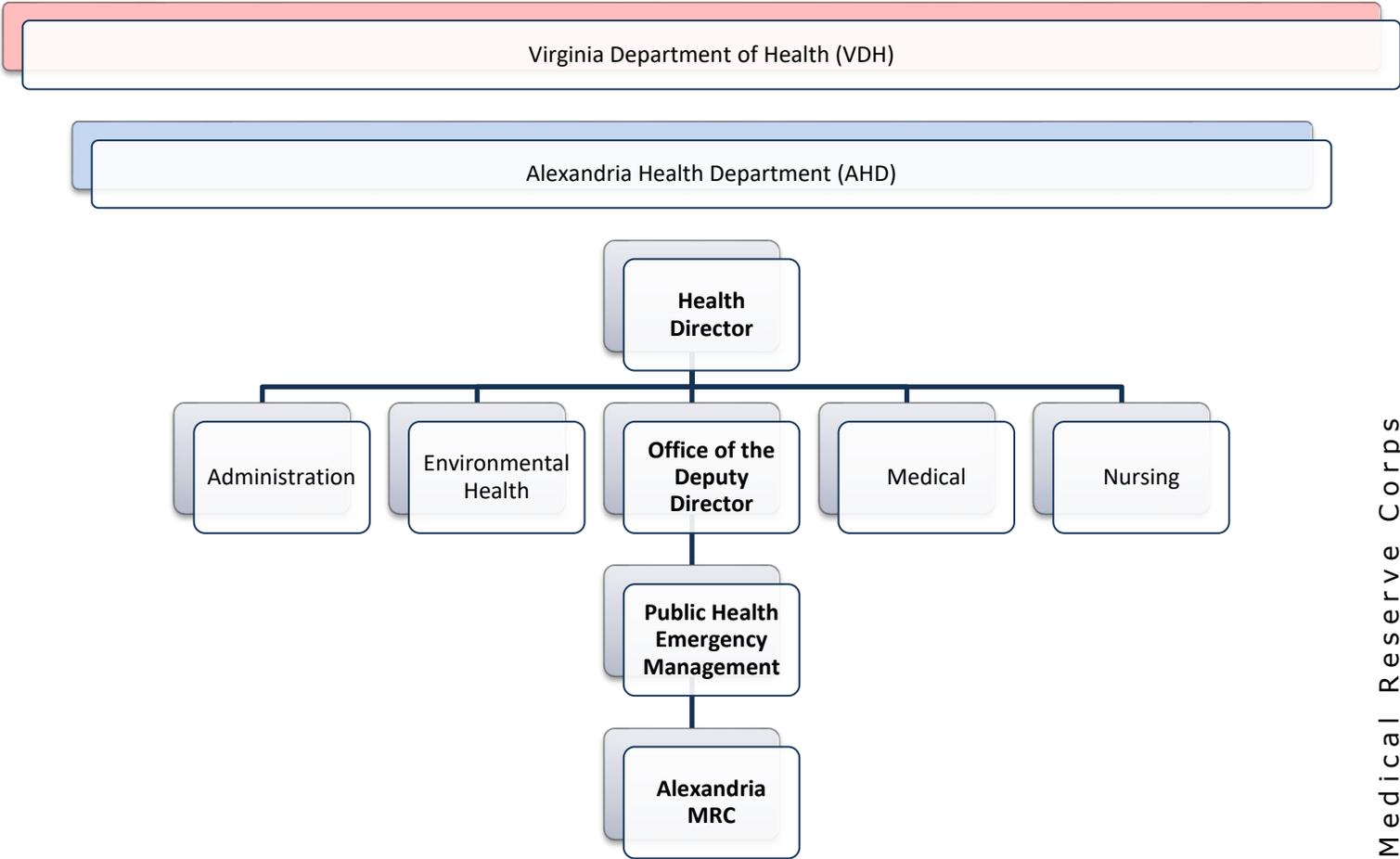
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ABOUT THE ALEXANDRIA HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The mission of AHD is **"to protect and promote health and well-being in our communities."**
The Alexandria MRC is organized within the Health Department under the Public Health Emergency
Management (PHEM) Team (see Figure 1).

The Alexandria Health Department fulfills its mission by:

Working Together

Improving Continuously

Making a Difference

Figure 1. Alexandria Health Department Organization Chart

Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

Alexandria Health Department (AHD)

- Health Director
  - Administration
  - Environmental Health
  - Office of the Deputy Director
    - Public Health Emergency Management
      - Alexandria MRC
  - Medical
  - Nursing

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ALEXANDRIA MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS

ABOUT THE ALEXANDRIA MRC

HISTORY AND CURRENT MEMBERSHIP

The Alexandria MRC program was established in 2005. In our first year we had just under 100 active volunteers. Today, our membership has grown to nearly 400 active volunteers. Volunteers come from diverse backgrounds and have varying levels of education and training. About 30% of our volunteers come from professional medical backgrounds, while 70% of our volunteers are non-medical, support volunteers.

MISSION AND GOALS OF ALEXANDRIA MRC

The Alexandria MRC works to improve the health and safety of communities across the City of Alexandria. We do this by ensuring the city is equipped with medical and non-medial volunteers who support existing public health infrastructure during both public health emergencies, and as part of routine community activities.

Specific goals of the Alexandria MRC are to:

- Recruit new MRC volunteers to provide public health support during local emergencies and disasters, and to participate in ongoing public health activities in the community
- Deliver a comprehensive training program for volunteers that meets both the needs of the community during an emergency and personal expectations of the volunteer
- Maintain volunteer communication through the use of social media, newsletters, e-mail, and mass notification systems
- Support community emergency response and recovery efforts to enhance the capacity of local response agencies
- Promote public education and awareness campaigns that support public health and preparedness initiatives
- Integrate MRC unit into community response plans and preparedness efforts
- Collaborate with community volunteer organizations, including Volunteer Alexandria, CERT, and the American Red Cross

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Alexandria MRC program operates according to the following principles:

- We treat all clients, staff, volunteers, and partners with respect and dignity in all situations.
- We respect that volunteers are donating their time and expertise for the overall health and well-being of the community.
- We provide training and volunteer opportunities that will enhance volunteers' experience and support our unit's objectives.
- We communicate clearly and consistently with our volunteers, and encourage and value input from our volunteers.
- We acknowledge that participation in MRC trainings, events, and deployments is discretionary, and that our volunteers have the option to refuse assignments for any reason.

- We never ask a volunteer to perform tasks beyond the scope of their licensure, credentials, training, or level of comfort, or knowingly place a volunteer at risk.
- We consistently seek the inclusion of volunteers from across a variety of demographic groups, backgrounds, professions, and affiliations.

WHAT DOES THE NAME MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS MEAN TO OUR COMMUNITY?

In Alexandria, the MRC is a group of medical and non-medical volunteers trained and ready to support public health during emergencies, as well as through routine community activities. The "medical" in Medical Reserve Corps does not limit MRC units to medical professionals; individuals without medical training can and do fill essential supporting roles.

medical	**reserve**	**corps**
/ˈmedək(ə)l/	/rəˈzərv/	/kôr/
adjective	*noun*	*noun*
Relating to the science of medicine, the treatment of illness and injury.	A body of people kept back to reinforce or protect others, most often in an emergency.	A body or group of people engaged in a particular activity.

BENEFITS TO BEING AN MRC VOLUNTEER

- ✓ Knowledge that you're helping to improve the health and safety of your community
- ✓ Satisfaction from serving your community in times of emergency
- ✓ Opportunities to develop your skills and gain experience in a variety of public health areas
- ✓ Opportunities to provide input and initiate public health service projects within your area of expertise and interest
- ✓ Training opportunities with the possibility of continuing education units (CEU's)

STEPS TO BECOMING AN MRC VOLUNTEER

Completion of the steps outlined below will put you on track toward becoming an MRC volunteer. In choosing to become a volunteer, you agree to support the community's public health preparedness, response, and recovery efforts when requested. We encourage you to discuss your participation in the Alexandria MRC program with your family and employer to make them aware of your volunteer commitment during an emergency.

1. CREATE A VIRGINIA VOLUNTEER HEALTH SYSTEM (VVHS) ACCOUNT

All MRC volunteers must create an online account and complete profile information through the Virginia Volunteer Health System (VVHS) (https://vamrc.org/vvhs). VVHS is a web-based system used by MRC units across the state to register, credential, track, and communicate with volunteers interested in assisting with health-related activities during emergencies. It is important to keep your contact information and details about any professional licensure you hold up to date in VVHS. See Appendix C for a step-by-step guide to creating and maintaining your VVHS profile.

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2. LOG IN TO YOUR TRAIN VIRGINIA ACCOUNT

After submitting an application in VVHS, an account will be established for you in TRAIN Virginia (TRAIN VA). TRAIN VA is an online learning resource managed by the Virginia Department of Health. TRAIN enables you to take online courses to improve your skills and learn more about specific technical areas of public health emergency response. See Appendix D for a step-by-step guide to logging in to your TRAIN VA account and registering for courses.

3. ATTEND ORIENTATION

MRC volunteers are required to attend an Alexandria MRC volunteer orientation to be eligible to participate in in-person training or deployment opportunites. Orientation is often combined with a Personal Preparedness course. The two-hour orientation and personal preparedness class provides an overview of the MRC program, including Alexandria MRC policies & procedures, and covers a variety of emergency preparedness topics. Orientation also gives you an opportunity to meet other new MRC volunteers.

During orientation, you will review and sign the Alexandria MRC Code of Conduct (Appendix A), the Privacy & Liability Policy (Appendix B), and a Background Check Consent Form, as well as have your picture taken for your Alexandria MRC badge. We will also notarize your completed Background Check Form (SP-167). All prospective volunteers should bring a photo ID to orientation so we can verify your identity and make a copy to keep on file. Medical volunteers should bring their professional certifications so we can verify your credentials and make a copy to keep on file.

4. COMPLETE BACKGROUND AND REFERENCE CHECK

Alexandria MRC conducts background investigations that include criminal history record, sex offender registry, and crimes against minors. Depending on your volunteer assignment, a federal fingerprint background investigation may be conducted. Disqualifying convictions include, but are not limited to, the following: sexual offenses, violent activity, HIPAA violations, and inappropriate relationships with patients (healthcare workers). At their own discretion, the MRC Coordinator, in consultation with the Alexandria Health Director, will evaluate convictions on a case-by-case basis.

Additionally, the MRC Coordinator will check references for any MRC volunteer who wishes to serve in a leadership capacity. References may be personal or professional; however, all references should be able to attest to your skills, qualifications, and personal attributes.

MRC VOLUNTEER STANDARDS

To serve in the Alexandria MRC, individuals must meet certain criteria.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Volunteers must submit an application through the Virginia Volunteer Health System (VVHS) and maintain their online volunteer profiles.
- Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age.
- U.S. citizenship is not required; however, volunteers must present a valid form of identification at the time of orientation. Volunteers must have a valid driver's license or other state-issued identification.
- Volunteers must pass a Combination Criminal History and Sex Offender Search Background Investigation (SP-167), and must remain free of felony and serious misdemeanor convictions.

- Volunteers will agree to abide by and sign the Alexandria MRC Code of Conduct and Liability Policy (Appendix A).
- Volunteers will agree to abide by and sign the Health Insurance Accountability and Portability Act (HIPAA) Policy (Appendix B).

NON-MEDICAL VOLUNTEERS

Non-medical MRC volunteers are those who do not work in the medical field or who have an inactive or out-of-state medical license/credential. If you hold an inactive or out-of-state license/credential, we still encourage you to enter your license/credential number in your online volunteer profile. If an emergency is of sufficient magnitude, the governor may waive certain requirements to authorize retired and out-of-state medical professionals to perform various clinical functions.

MEDICAL VOLUNTEERS

Medical MRC volunteers are required to hold an active license or certification to practice in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and must volunteer strictly within their legally defined scope of practice. If you hold a license or certification upon admission to the MRC, you must update this information in your online volunteer profile. In addition, you must provide a copy to the MRC Coordinator so that your credentials can be verified with the appropriate agency. Medical volunteers are required to provide proof of re-licensure or re-certification if their credentials expire. You must report loss or suspension of your professional license to the MRC Coordinator. The Alexandria MRC does not pay for re-licensing/re-certification fees.

VOLUNTEER CONDUCT

The Alexandria MRC program expects that volunteers will comply with the following standards of behavior. The complete Alexandria MRC Code of Conduct is included with this *Handbook* as Appendix A.

VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS

- Exhibit professional behavior and adhere to the volunteer code of conduct
- Clearly display current MRC identification (i.e. wear MRC badge) while on duty
- Adhere to applicable safety standards, and all local, state, and federal laws at all times
- Maintain professional appearance while participating in any MRC-related activity
- Adhere to chain of command, both within the local MRC unit and any Incident Command System established during an emergency
- Maintain updated contact and licensing information in Virginia Volunteer Health System (VVHS)
- Participate in MRC meetings, outreach activities, trainings, exercises, and mobilizations when available
- Attend an MRC orientation session and complete the following core trainings within the first year of application:
  - Personal and Family Preparedness
  - IS-100
  - IS-700
- Respond to quarterly communication drills within designated 12-hour time frame

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SCOPE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY

State provisions for volunteer liability coverage exclude coverage for activities that are not within a volunteer's position description. This means that if as an Alexandria MRC volunteer you are acting outside of the scope of your assigned role, you may be held liable for problems that occur as a result. **It is very important that you be familiar with your position description and that you perform strictly within the scope of your assigned role.** If at any time you do not feel qualified or comfortable in performing the position you have been assigned, immediately contact the MRC Coordinator or your incident supervisor.

NON-MEDICAL VOLUNTEERS

The type of emergency in which the Alexandria MRC is activated typically determines the scope of volunteer activity for *non-medical* volunteers. The MRC Coordinator or the relevant incident command position will assign roles to non-medical volunteers based on need. Generally, non-medical volunteers perform support functions. **Under no circumstances should a volunteer who does not have an appropriate medical license/credential attempt to perform any clinical function.**

MEDICAL VOLUNTEERS

The type of emergency *and* Virginia law typically determines the scope of clinical work for *medical* volunteers. For example, the state may lift some restrictions on scopes of practice in the event of a public health emergency. If the scope of your assigned volunteer activities changes, you will be notified by the Alexandria MRC program and trained accordingly. The status of your professional license/credential may also affect the scope of your volunteer activities. If your license lapses or credentials change, you must immediately report the changes to the MRC Coordinator, in addition to updating this information in your VVHS profile, so that we do not place you in a volunteer position that requires an active license/credential.

CONFIDENTIALITY

As an Alexandria MRC volunteer, you are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which you may have access while serving as a volunteer. Confidentiality is particularly important with regard to clients' protected health information. During orientation, you must read, understand, and agree to comply with the Virginia Department of Health Privacy Policy, included with this *Handbook* as Appendix B.

REPRESENTATION OF THE ALEXANDRIA MRC

Alexandria MRC volunteers are authorized to act as representatives of the unit ONLY when indicated in their position descriptions. Alexandria MRC volunteers should *never* contact or communicate with organizations or individuals on behalf of the Alexandria MRC or the Alexandria Health Department unless given express written consent to do so by the MRC Coordinator.

MRC volunteers are prohibited from using their MRC affiliation to promote partisan political or religious matters. As an Alexandria MRC volunteer, you should never take any action or make any statement that significantly affects or obligates the unit, including but not limited to statements to the media, fundraising, coalition or lobbying efforts with other organizations, or any agreements involving contractual or financial obligations.

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HEALTH & SAFETY WHILE VOLUNTEERING

It is important that Alexandria MRC volunteers stay safe and maintain their health especially when deployed in a volunteer capacity. Volunteers should:

- Stay informed about hazards and emergencies that may affect our area, and learn how to respond to all types of emergencies.

- Maintain a personal or family emergency plan. See Appendix E for information about preparing a family emergency plan.

- Keep an emergency go-kit at home and in your vehicle, and maintain emergency contact info in VVHS.

- Let the MRC coordinator know if you suffer from any medical conditions that could be exacerbated by an emergency or affect your ability to volunteer.

- Learn about the possible emotional and physical impacts of an emergency on you and others, and be aware of how these may impact you and others while volunteering and afterward.

- Notify your assigned supervisor immediately of any safety hazards or security issues while volunteering.

- Take a break whenever you need it and get plenty of rest following your volunteer shift. Eat nutritious food and stay hydrated.

ATTIRE

Alexandria MRC volunteers **must** wear their MRC badge in plain view above waist level whenever serving in a volunteer capacity or visiting the Alexandria Health Department. Any volunteer that discontinues his or her affiliation with the Alexandria MRC must return the badge and lanyard to the MRC Coordinator. Volunteers are required to wear closed-toe shoes or other appropriately functional footwear whenever volunteering.

During drills, exercises, and deployments, MRC volunteers may be required to wear a vest to reflect their assigned role. If issued, you must return these items to the appropriate staff person after completion of your assignment.

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

The Alexandria Health Department will provide MRC volunteers with personal protective equipment as appropriate based on the nature of the emergency. This equipment may include gloves, masks, eye protection, and other personal protective items.

Members are prohibited from using MRC equipment and supplies for any purposes other than those directly associated with MRC activities or when needed to provide emergency care if an MRC volunteer finds himself or herself in a position to assist at the scene of an accident or illness. In each of these cases, the Alexandria MRC will replace any disposable supplies used.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The Alexandria MRC program expects that all volunteers will meet standards of professional conduct while performing volunteer duties. If necessary, the MRC Coordinator will initiate action to address inappropriate conduct or performance and to correct behavior that negatively affects the Alexandria MRC, its volunteers, or the Alexandria Health Department. The level of disciplinary action will relate

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to the severity of the inappropriate conduct or behavior (i.e., actions need not occur sequentially). Disciplinary actions may consist of:

1) Informal Counseling (Verbal)

2) Formal Counseling (Documented)

3) Suspension

4) Dismissal

Any of the following constitute cause for disciplinary action:

- ✕ Neglect of duty or incompetence
- ✕ Working outside the scope of clinical licensure/credentials
- ✕ Dishonesty, including falsifying records
- ✕ Possessing, dispensing, or being under the influence or impaired by alcohol or an illegal substance while on duty
- ✕ Commission or conviction of a felony or misdemeanor which would affect the volunteer's suitability for continued association with the MRC
- ✕ Discourteous treatment of staff, fellow volunteers, or clients

- ✕ Profane or abusive language
- ✕ Willful disobedience of volunteer standards and the MRC Code of Conduct & Liability Policy
- ✕ Engaging in prohibited political activity while on duty
- ✕ Misuse of city or state government property
- ✕ Unsafe work habits
- ✕ Seeking to obtain financial, sexual, or political benefit from another employee, volunteer, or client by the use of force, fear, intimidation, or other means
- ✕ Any other inappropriate conduct, performance, or behavior that constitutes cause for disciplinary action

Alexandria Health Department staff or Incident Command staff supervising an MRC volunteer may initiate informal counseling if necessary; however, any disciplinary action beyond informal counseling will involve the MRC Coordinator. Deployed volunteers should contact the MRC Coordinator as soon as possible if they are not able to participate after being deployed. Failure to do so may result in removal from the unit.

NO SHOW POLICY

Volunteers who register for a deployment, emergency response, or training and do not show up, or contact the MRC Coordinator or designee to inform them, will be considered "No Shows". Accountability is very important, and "No Shows" can result in events being short-staffed or empty seats for training. For "No Shows", two written warnings will be given over e-mail, and upon the third infraction volunteers will be notified in writing of removal from the unit. Volunteers with special circumstances (medical emergency, etc.) should contact the MRC Coordinator at their earliest convenience.

VOLUNTEER DISMISSAL

The Alexandria MRC accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the mutual discretion of the Alexandria MRC and the volunteer. Alexandria MRC volunteers agree that the Alexandria MRC may, at any time, decide to terminate the volunteer's relationship with the MRC unit. Likewise, an Alexandria MRC volunteer may, at any time, decide to sever his or her relationship with the MRC unit. Notice of such a decision should be communicated to the MRC Coordinator as soon as possible.

Volunteers are required to return their MRC badge and any other MRC-issued supplies or equipment upon termination of their affiliation with the Alexandria MRC.

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COMMUNICATION

VIRGINIA VOLUNTEER HEALTH SYSTEM (VVHS)

Alexandria MRC will primarily communicate information to volunteers through the Virginia Volunteer Health System (VVHS). VVHS enables Alexandria MRC to quickly send out messages to one or hundreds of volunteers via email, phone, or text message.
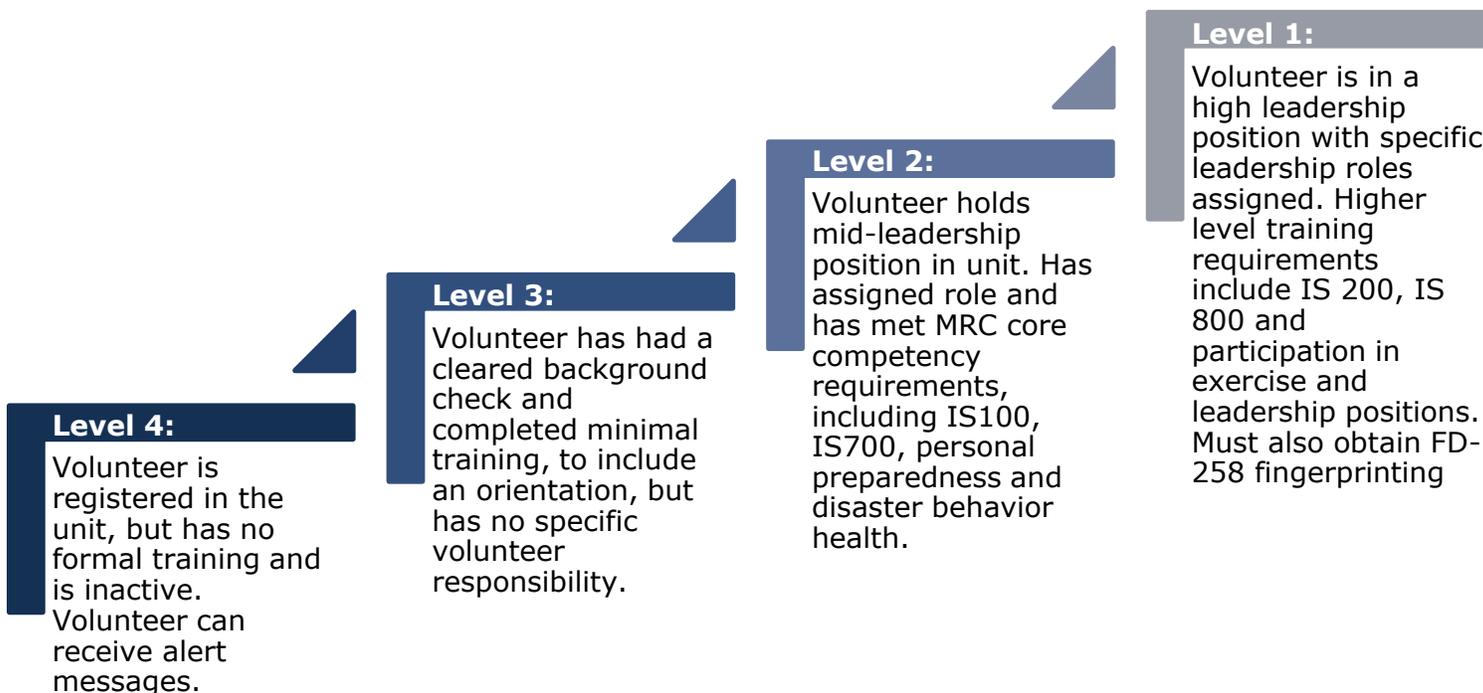
Alexandria MRC volunteers are required to maintain an online VVHS profile, and set up alerts within VVHS so they can receive messages about upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, emergency information, and MRC activations. Setting up alerts in VVHS requires that you provide your contact information, including phone numbers and email addresses, and designate your preferred method of contact. It is important that you keep your contact information current so that we may reach you easily during an emergency and the Alexandria MRC is activated to respond.

Every quarter, Alexandria MRC conducts a 12-hour Alert Drill, which allows us to test our capability to reach volunteers via email, phone, and text during an emergency. Volunteers are asked to respond to the drill within 12 hours to indicate receipt of the alert. It is critical that you update your contact information so we can reach you in times of an emergency, and that volunteers respond to (ideally) every 12-hour Alert Drill. **Volunteers who do not respond to at least one 12-hour Alert Drill in the span of a year may be removed from the unit.**

TRAINING

VOLUNTEER LEVELS

The Alexandria MRC recognizes that volunteers differ in many regards, including age, interests, professional training, life experiences, and levels of obligation to other volunteer or paid positions. One goal of the MRC program is to create an atmosphere that works well for *all* volunteers *and* ensures that the City of Alexandria is prepared in the event of a large-scale public health emergency. The Virginia tiered system of volunteering facilitates that goal:

Level 1:
Volunteer is in a high leadership position with specific leadership roles assigned. Higher level training requirements include IS 200, IS 800 and participation in exercise and leadership positions. Must also obtain FD-258 fingerprinting

Level 2:
Volunteer holds mid-leadership position in unit. Has assigned role and has met MRC core competency requirements, including IS100, IS700, personal preparedness and disaster behavior health.

Level 3:
Volunteer has had a cleared background check and completed minimal training, to include an orientation, but has no specific volunteer responsibility.

Level 4:
Volunteer is registered in the unit, but has no formal training and is inactive. Volunteer can receive alert messages.

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CORE COMPETENCIES

Core competencies represent the baseline knowledge level and skills that all MRC volunteers should have, regardless of their assigned role. These competencies represent a minimum standard that the Alexandria MRC builds upon to train volunteers at advanced levels. The competencies also provide a "common language" between MRC units that enables units to communicate their capacities to one another clearly and efficiently. As an Alexandria MRC volunteer, you should be able to:

1) Describe the procedures and steps necessary to protect your health, safety, and overall well being and that of your family, the team, and the community

2) Document that you have an existing personal and family preparedness plan

3) Describe the chain of command [e.g., Incident Command System (ICS), National Incident Management System (NIMS)], how it to applies to a given incident, and how the MRC is integrated into the chain of command

4) Describe the MRC's role in public health and emergency response and how this role applies to a given incident

5) Describe your communication role and the MRC process for communicating with response partners, media, the public, and others

6) Describe the impact of an event on your mental health and that of responders, the public, and others

7) Demonstrate your ability to follow procedures for assignment, activation, reporting, and deactivation

8) Identify the limits to your own skills, knowledge, and abilities as they pertain to your assigned MRC role

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Online and in-person training opportunities offered through Alexandria MRC help ensure volunteers meet the core competencies listed above. A training plan for Alexandria MRC volunteers was developed based on the expected competencies of all public health workers, as well as federal and regional requirements. This training plan (below) is intended to guide MRC volunteers toward completing training that will help them meet core competencies, but is not a list of courses required to volunteer. Alexandria MRC volunteers are asked to complete Orientation, Personal Preparedness Training, FEMA IS-100, and FEMA IS-700 within one year of registration. Additional training, while strongly recommended, is not required.

Some training sessions, such as the MRC Volunteer Orientation are offered in-class only; however, many training sessions can be completed online. We strongly encourage you to review the online trainings offered through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) (http://training.fema.gov) and TRAIN Virginia (www.train.org/virginia) and to register for the courses that interest you most.

When you complete a course that requires registration through TRAIN Virginia, the system will keep a record of your course completion. If you take an in-class or online course outside of TRAIN, remember to provide the MRC Coordinator with a copy of your course completion certificate so that it may be included in your volunteer file and your volunteer level may be updated accordingly.

If you would like to register for in-class training or complete a course online but require assistance, contact the MRC Coordinator. You can also contact the MRC coordinator regarding upcoming in-person training.

JUST-IN-TIME TRAINING

Due to time constraints and the amount of material to cover, it is impossible to train every MRC volunteer in advance for every possible emergency. During certain types of emergencies, Alexandria MRC may conduct just-in-time training (JITT) for MRC volunteers. JITT covers information that is relevant to the current incident. For example, during a response that requires the Alexandria Health Department to open points of dispensing (PODs), JITT will cover specific information about the disease agent, dispensing protocols, the POD command structure, volunteer duties, and guidance for dealing with inquiries from the public or media.

MRC TRAINING PLAN

1. **Training that meets primary core competencies for all MRC volunteers**
    a. Basic ICS and NIMS (take two courses)
        i. IS-100.b Introduction to Incident Command System [online]
        ii. IS-700.a: Intro to National Incident Management System [online]
    b. Mass Dispensing (take one course)
        i. Mass Dispensing Overview: An SNS Perspective [online]
        ii. Point of Dispensing Refresher [in-person]
        iii. Mass Antibiotic Dispensing Overview [online]
    c. Personal Preparedness (take one course)
        i. AHD Personal Preparedness Course [in-person]
        ii. IS-22 Are you Ready? [online]
        iii. IS-909 Community Preparedness [online]
2. **Training that meets additional core competencies for all MRC volunteers**
    a. Mental Health (take one course)
        i. Introduction to Mental Health Preparedness [online]
        ii. Psychological First Aid – [in-person through MRC/Red Cross]
    b. Outbreak Response (take all courses)
        i. Online MRC Training Modules 1-3 [online]
        ii. Basic Infection Control [in-person]
        iii. Epidemiological Interviewing [in-person]
        iv. Category A Agents [in-person]
    c. Safety and Privacy (take two courses)
        i. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) [online]
        ii. VDH: HIPAA 101 [online]
    d. Cultural Competency (take one course)
        i. Cultural Sensitivity Considerations in Emergency [online]
        ii. Assisting Individuals with Access and Functional Needs [online]
        iii. Individuals with Disabilities and Access and Functional Needs [in-person]
        iv. Pediatric Care in Disasters [online]
    e. CPR/BLS (take one course)
        i. CPR Heart Saver [in-person]
        ii. BLS/CPR for MRC volunteers [in-person]

SOME OF OUR FAVORITE ONLINE AND IN-PERSON "ELECTIVES":
- IS-200 and IS 800 (MRC Leadership)
- Public Health Outreach Training
- ABC's of Pandemic Influenza
- Vector Outreach Training
- REVIVE! Opioid Lay Rescuer Training
- Vectors of Disease in Disasters
- Rabies Awareness
- Active Shooter Training with AHD and Alexandria Police Department

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ACTIVATION

SUPPORT CAPACITY

The Alexandria MRC serves as a local "all-hazards" resource, augmenting, assisting, and supporting the existing local public health system. The unit is organized into pools of volunteers based on their levels of training, interest, and credentials. The MRC Coordinator assembles and assigns teams during the activation and mobilization phase based on the needs of the response. MRC volunteers will only be assigned tasks or given responsibilities in functional areas for which they are clinically licensed, properly trained, or otherwise equipped.

ACTIVATION PROCEDURES

NON-EMERGENCY ACTIVATION

Alexandria MRC may request volunteers to assist with routine Alexandria Health Department functions such as:

- Public awareness campaigns
- Administrative support for public health programs
- Vaccination clinics (back-to-school, seasonal influenza, etc.)
- MRC recruitment tables
- Special projects

These are the most common types of volunteer activation. When volunteer opportunities arise, the MRC Coordinator will use VVHS to notify volunteers via email. The notification will include a description of the volunteer need, the dates and times of the need, what MRC volunteers will be requested to do, and contact information for the coordinating staff person. MRC volunteers interested in the opportunity should indicate their availability through VVHS and follow any other instructions contained in the email to confirm participation.

EMERGENCY ACTIVATION

Alexandria MRC volunteers must follow all rules and regulations for the deployment of volunteers during an emergency. At no time should you self-deploy without first being activated and dispatched by the MRC Coordinator or authorized Health Department staff. **Self-deployment constitutes a breach of the MRC Code of Conduct & Liability Policy, which will result in disciplinary action.**

When the Health Director requests or authorizes MRC activation for an emergency, the MRC Coordinator will notify volunteers by VVHS email, text, or phone recording and provide the following information:

1. Nature and scope of the event or emergency
2. Estimated numbers and types of volunteers needed
3. Location(s) to which volunteers are to report

To respond, follow the instructions outlined in the alert. You may be requested to report to a specific location at a designated time. If the activation information is unclear to you, contact the MRC Coordinator immediately.

REPORTING FOR DUTY

The Alexandria MRC participates in a range of events and the unit may be activated for different types of public health emergencies, small and large. The locations to which you may be asked to report could vary with each activation. For example, we may ask that you report directly to a specific work site for an outreach event, while during a public health emergency, you may be asked to report first to a public health staging area for check-in, just-in-time training, and role assignment before being deployed to the actual incident. **Always follow the instructions for reporting as indicated in the alert message you receive. This goes for emergency and non-emergency activation.**

Whenever reporting for an assignment, remember to bring your MRC badge. **Your MRC badge is required upon check-in and must be worn at all times while on duty.** Depending on the scope and expected length of your volunteer shift, you should also consider bringing your Go-Kit or other items for your comfort and convenience.

ROLE ASSIGNMENTS

When deployed, MRC volunteers serve alongside staff in a variety of functions. The specific function that an MRC volunteer fulfills can vary with each activation. Role assignments are based on the needs of the event, as well as your credentials and level of training. You will never be assigned to a function beyond the scope of your licensure, skills, or level of comfort.

Before your assignment, you may receive a job action sheet and just-in-time training. A job action sheet is a tool that defines your assigned role and lists the specific tasks that you will be expected to fulfill. Just-in-time training prepares staff and volunteers immediately before beginning their assignments by providing specific incident and job duty information. Just-in-time training is especially helpful if you are activated to fill a role for which you have not previously received training.

INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

The Alexandria MRC will operate under the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command System (ICS) when activated in response to an emergency or planned event. All MRC volunteers should have a basic understanding of ICS, regardless of their role or volunteer level. The use of NIMS/ICS enables the MRC to integrate with the emergency response system used by the Alexandria Health Department and local emergency services agencies.

NIMS/ICS BASIC CONCEPTS

1. NIMS/ICS provides a standardized organizational structure, common terminology, and a flexible management system that is adaptable to multi-agency and multi-jurisdiction responses.

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2. ICS provides the flexibility to activate and establish an organizational structure around only those functions that need to be performed so that the response to the emergency is efficient and effective.

3. ICS is scalable and can be utilized for any type or size of emergency, ranging from a minor incident involving only a few emergency service agencies, to a major incident involving multiple agencies and/or jurisdictions.

4. Within ICS, every person has a designated supervisor (this is also known as "unity of command") to whom he or she reports at the scene of the incident. This eliminates confusion caused by multiple conflicting directives.

BASIC ICS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The basic ICS organizational structure is comprised of five sections: Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration. Each section may contain several units, established as needed. Figure 3 depicts a basic ICS structure.

Figure 3. Basic ICS Structure
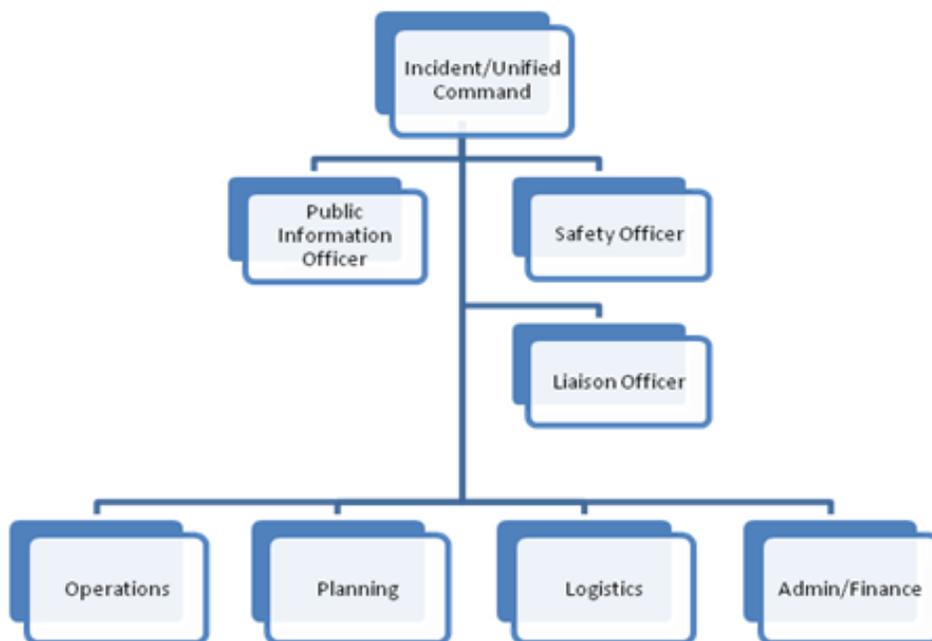
Command

Command is responsible for overall management of the incident. Within ICS, there are two possible types of command: Single Command or Unified Command. In a Single Command structure, the Incident Commander (IC) is solely responsible for the overall management of an incident. In a Unified Command, agencies that have a jurisdictional responsibility at a multi-jurisdictional incident contribute to incident command responsibilities. The following are a list of Command Staff positions, which may or may not be established by the IC depending on the complexity of the incident or other situational demands.

Incident Commander (IC)

The IC assumes overall responsibility for the management of the operation. The IC may be selected based on the greatest jurisdictional involvement in the incident, the number of resources involved in the incident, existing statutory or pre-agreement authority, or qualifications for a specific type of incident.

Public Information Officer (PIO)

The PIO develops accurate and complete information regarding incident cause, size, current situation, resources committed, and other matters of general interest. The PIO will be the point of contact for the media and other organizations desiring information about the incident. In both Single and Unified Command structures, only one PIO is designated, although assistants from other agencies or departments may be appointed.

Safety Officer

The Safety Officer asseses hazardous or unsafe situations and develops measures to ensure the safety of incident personnel. The Safety Officer must have the authority to stop and/or prevent unsafe acts and practices. In both Single and Unified Command structures, only one Safety Officer is designated, although assistants from other agencies or departments may be appointed.

Liaison Officer

The Liaison Officer is the point of contact for assisting and cooperating agency representatives and stakeholder groups. Only one Liaison Officer will be assigned for each incident, including incidents operating under Unified Command and multi-jurisdictional incidents.

Operations

The Operations Section manages all incident tactical operations (i.e., those operations directed at the reduction of immediate hazards, the establishment of control over the situation, and the restoration of normal activities and conditions).

Planning

The Planning Section collects, evaluates, and disseminates disaster intelligence. This section maintains information on the current and forecast situation, and on the status of assigned resources. The Planning Section also prepares Incident Action Plans, which outline the objectives, strategy, organization, and resources necessary to mitigate an incident effectively, and cover tactical and support activities for a given operational period.

Logistics

The Logistics Section provides all support needs to an incident, including ordering resources from off-site locations. The Logistics Section provides facilities, transportation, supplies, and equipment maintenance, as well as fueling, feeding, communications, and medical services.

Administration/Finance

The Administration/Finance Section, usually established in large and complex incidents, oversees financial and cost analysis aspects of an incident. This section also manages contract negotiations, tracks personnel and equipment time, processes claims for accidents and injuries, and works with the Logistics Section to procure resources.

LIABILITY PROTECTION FOR VOLUNTEERS

Activated Alexandria MRC volunteers fall under the liability and risk management codes of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the City of Alexandria, provided that volunteers act within the scope of their training and assignment. The following is a collection of federal, state, and local laws that may apply to volunteers of the Alexandria MRC:

Alexandria City Code Sec. 4-3-8

Limits the liability of the City and its agents/representatives who, in good faith, carry out, comply with or attempt to comply with emergency service orders, rules, or regulations promulgated by the City. Also limits the liability of any professionally licensed/certified person rendering aid involving that licensed/certified skill in the city during a disaster.

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Virginia Code § 2.2-3605, Virginia State Government Volunteers Act
Gives volunteers in state and local service the protection of the Commonwealth's sovereign immunity to the same extent as paid staff. Volunteers include, but are not limited to, persons who serve in an MRC unit.

Virginia Code § 8.01-225 through 225.02, Good Samaritan Act
Exempts from civil damages any person who, in good faith, renders emergency care or assistance, without compensation, to any ill or injured person (i) at the scene of an accident, fire, or any life-threatening emergency; (ii) at a location for screening or stabilization of an emergency medical condition arising from an accident, fire, or any life-threatening emergency; or (iii) en route to any hospital, medical clinic or doctor's office.

Also provides certain liability protections for health care providers and any hospital or other entity that credentials health care providers when a local emergency has been or is subsequently declared, and the conditions cause a lack of resources rendering the health care provider unable to provide the level or manner of care that otherwise would have been required in the absence of the emergency.

Virginia Code § 32.1-48.016, Immunity from Liability
Any person, including a person who serves in a MRC unit, who, in good faith and in the performance of his/her duties, acts in compliance with this article and the Board of Health's regulations shall not be liable for any civil damages for any act or omission resulting from such actions unless such act or omission was the result of gross negligence or willful misconduct.

Virginia Code § 44-146.23, Immunity from Liability
Neither the Commonwealth, nor any political subdivision thereof, nor federal agencies, nor other public or private agencies, nor, except in cases of willful misconduct, public or private employees, nor representatives of any of them, engaged in any emergency services activities while complying with or attempting to comply with this chapter or any rule, regulation, or executive order promulgated pursuant to the provisions of this chapter, shall be liable for the death of, or any injury to, persons or damage to property as a result of such activities. For the purposes of the immunity conferred by this subsection, representatives of public or private employees shall include, but shall not be limited to, volunteers in state and local services who are persons who serve in an MRC unit.

Public Law 109-148, Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act)
Provides immunity from liability claims arising from administration and use of covered countermeasures to manufacturers, distributors, program planners, and qualified persons involved in the administration and use of a covered countermeasure, as specified in a declaration by the Secretary of the US Department of Health and Human Services, except in cases of willful misconduct.

During orientation, Alexandria MRC volunteers are required to sign the VDH HIPAA & Liability Policy, acknowledging that they have read and understand the scope of liability protection provided to them as volunteers acting under the guidance of the Alexandria MRC during an emergency or disaster.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHO CAN JOIN THE ALEXANDRIA MRC?

Community members, with or without medical training, who are willing to support routine public health activities or serve during public health emergencies are encouraged to join the Alexandria MRC. Other eligibility criteria include:

- Be 18 years of age or older
- U.S. citizenship is not required, but must have valid form of government issued ID
- Attend an MRC Orientation and agree to Code of Conduct and Liability Policy

- Pass a combined Criminal History and Sex Offender Search background investigation
- Be willing to volunteer, if you are able, during an emergency

DO I HAVE TO LIVE IN ALEXANDRIA TO VOLUNTEER WITH ALEXANDRIA MRC?

You do not have to live in the city of Alexandria to volunteer with Alexandria MRC, and some volunteers do choose to volunteer in Alexandria even though they may live elsewhere. All localities in the National Capital Region have MRC units that accept volunteers.

DO I HAVE TO BE A PRACTICING HEALTHCARE PROVIDER TO VOLUNTEER?

No. The Alexandria MRC needs both medical and non-medical volunteers, though some volunteer positions require medical licensure. Volunteers with prior medical expertise could serve as POD leaders, medical interviewers, among other positions. There will also be a need for unlicensed health professionals and individuals without medical training to fill support roles. The Alexandria MRC offers training in emergency response, public health, and other related fields to all volunteers.

AM I OBLIGATED TO VOLUNTEER IN AN EMERGENCY?

As a volunteer, there is no requirement that you be available for every emergency. However, if you know you are unwilling or able to *ever* volunteer in an emergency, you may consider volunteer opportunities with other organizations in the City of Alexandria that may be a better fit. We do understand that some volunteers may have personal circumstances including work, military, or family commitments that may prohibit you from volunteering sometimes.

HOW WILL YOU CONTACT ME IN AN EMERGENCY?

We will notify you by email, phone, and text message using the contact information you provided in VVHS when applying to the join the Alexandria MRC. It is very important that you keep your contact information current in your VVHS profile.

WILL YOU ASK ME TO VOLUNTEER FOR AN EMERGENCY OUTSIDE OF VIRGINIA?

In limited circumstances Alexandria MRC volunteers could be asked to deploy as Virginia MRC volunteers to another state in support of a state-to-state response request. Volunteers who wish to deploy both within the state and nationally are required to complete NIMS and ICS training.

WHO WILL HAVE ACCESS TO MY PERSONAL INFORMATION?

The Alexandria MRC Coordinator and Public Health Emergency Management Coordinator, as well as the State Coordinator, have access to the personal information you provided in VVHS. Alexandria Health Department staff may have access to your information as it relates to your volunteer role. You will be notified if there is a need to provide your information to any other organization.

I'VE MOVED OR AM TOO BUSY TO VOLUNTEER, HOW DO I LEAVE THE UNIT?

If you find you are unable to continue volunteering with Alexandria MRC, contact the MRC Coordinator. They will archive your VVHS volunteer profile and provide instruction on returning your badge.

IF I HAVE CONCERNS ONCE I HAVE VOLUNTEERED, WHOM DO I CONTACT?

The Alexandria MRC Coordinator is your primary point of contact. The MRC Coordinator can be reached at 703-746-4978 or at mrc@alexandriava.gov.

Alexandria Medical Reserve Corps

APPENDIX A — CODE OF CONDUCT

ALEXANDRIA MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS
CODE OF CONDUCT

All volunteers of the Alexandria Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) shall meet the following standards of conduct. As a volunteer of the Alexandria MRC, I agree to:

Ethical Conduct

- Maintain and abide by the standards of my profession, including licensure, certification and/or training requirements to support my MRC role
- Report changes to professional licensure, including suspension or termination, to the MRC Coordinator
- Act in the capacity of a MRC responder and present myself as a MRC volunteer only with prior authorization/deployment by the MRC Coordinator or the Alexandria Health Department
- Avoid inappropriate conduct and behavior, including behavior that is dangerous to others or myself (e.g., acts of violence, verbal or physical abuse, harassment)
- Avoid situations that could be interpreted as a conflict of interest
- Abstain from the use of city and state equipment and resources for personal use
- Refrain from transporting, storing, or consuming alcoholic beverages or illegal substances while performing volunteer duties
- Abstain from responding for duty under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances or under the influence of prescription or non-prescription medication that may influence my abilities
- Refrain from accepting or seeking on behalf of myself or any other person, any financial advantage or gain as a result of my affiliation with the MRC
- Abstain from publicly using my MRC affiliation in connection with the promotion of partisan politics, religious matters, or positions on any issue
- Avoid knowingly taking any action or making any statement intended to influence the conduct of the MRC in such a way as to confer any special benefit on any person, corporation, or entity in which I have an interest or affiliation
- Contact the MRC Coordinator as soon as possible if I am not able to participate after registering and being deployed to any event, emergency response, or training
- Abstain from the use of audio or video recording equipment, unless authorized
- Keep contact information current in the Virginia Volunteer Health System (VVHS)

Safety

- Put safety first in all volunteer activities
- Wear my MRC badge when deployed to any MRC-sponsored activity or while on site at the Alexandria Health Department
- Dress for the environment and wear closed toe footwear, if activated to respond
- Respect and use all equipment appropriately
- Promote healthy and safe work practices

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- Take care of self and others
- Report injuries, illnesses, accidents, safety hazards, and suspicious activity to the appropriate staff member

Respect

- Refrain from using and disclosing any protected information, to which I may have access, to any person not authorized to receive such information
- Avoid commenting with, answering questions, or divulging information to the media
- Respect the cultures, beliefs, opinions, and decisions of others, although I may not always agree
- Treat others with courtesy, sensitivity, tact, consideration, and humility
- Accept the chain of command and respect others regardless of their position

APPENDIX B — PRIVACY & LIABILITY POLICY

Virginia Medical Reserve Corps
HIPAA & Liability Policy Acknowledgment

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Protects Patient Privacy

As a student/volunteer performing duties for the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), you will have access to the Protected Health Information (PHI) of our clients. The fact that an individual is or was a client of the Virginia Department of Health is PHI. Federal and state laws, including HIPAA and our policies and procedures, protect the privacy and security of this PHI.

It is illegal for you to use or disclose PHI outside the scope of your volunteer duties for the Virginia Department of Health. This includes oral, written, or electronic uses and disclosures.

The following are guidelines for using public health information:

★ You may use PHI as necessary to carry out your duties as a student/volunteer.
★ You may share PHI with other health care providers for treatment purposes.
★ You may NOT photocopy PHI.
★ You must access only the minimum amount of PHI necessary to care for a patient or to carry out an assignment.
★ You may NOT record PHI (such as patient names, diagnoses, dates of birth, addresses, phone numbers, etc.) on any assignments you may need to turn into your instructor, reports you may need to turn in to your program, or forms you may need to take with you.
★ You may only access the PHI of patients for whom you are caring/volunteering when there is a need for the PHI.
★ Be aware of your surroundings when discussing PHI. For example, because others may overhear you, it is inappropriate to discuss PHI in bathrooms, lunch areas or in any other public place.
★ When disposing of any documents with PHI, do NOT put them into a waste can. Instead, place discarded documents with PHI into containers marked for shredding.
★ If you have questions about the use or disclosure of PHI, contact the health district's Privacy Officer or Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator.

MRC Volunteer Liability

Persons who volunteer to serve in a Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) unit could be protected from liability for injuries to persons treated by the MRC through various provisions of state and federal law. (*Note that in all cases the facts of the situation will determine if liability protections apply.*)

Code of Virginia § 44-146.23 (Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Services and Disaster Law of 2000)

- MRC volunteers while engaged in emergency service and activities should be immune from liability for negligence caused when providing medical and health services so long as they are doing so under supervision of the VDH.
  - o An emergency includes the threat of an occurrence that could cause substantial harm, preparing for disasters, and the prevention of injury.
- Additionally, during an emergency, those volunteers who are licensed or certified to render health care services should receive immunity from negligence when they gratuitously render aid using their skills.

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Code of Virginia § 2.2-3600 et seq., (State Government Volunteers Act)

- MRC volunteers may enjoy the protection of the Commonwealth's sovereign immunity if they are deemed to be a volunteer of VDH.

Code of Virginia § 8.01-225.02 may provide certain liability protection for health care providers during declared disasters.

- In the absence of gross negligence or willful misconduct, any health care provider who responds to a disaster shall not be liable for any injury or wrongful death of any person arising from the delivery or withholding of health care when (i) a state or local emergency has been or is subsequently declared in response to such disaster, and (ii) the emergency and subsequent conditions caused a lack of resources, attributable to the disaster, rendering the health care provider unable to provide the level or manner of care that otherwise would have been required in the absence of the emergency and which resulted in the injury or wrongful death at issue.

Code of Virginia § 8.01-225.01 - may provide protection from liability in cases where a provider is alleged to have abandoned his own patients while helping out in a declared emergency.

Code of Virginia § 8.01-225 (Good Samaritan Act)

- If MRC volunteers are actually assisting ill or injured people at a "scene of an accident, fire, or any life-threatening emergency" the Good Samaritan Act may apply.

Federal Law: Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act) Pub. L. 109-148

- If the MRC's activities relate to the dispensing of drugs or devices in an emergency situation, the PREP Act might apply.
- During a public health emergency, the Secretary of HHS may appoint MRC volunteers as intermittent disaster response personnel, which grants them the legal protections when they are working within the scope of their Federal employment as volunteers of the MRC federal deployment cadre. (http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/MRCDeployment/FAQ/LegalProtections).

Liability & Risk Management

Virginia Medical Reserve Corps volunteers are covered by VDH's Risk Management policy for daily public health activities when under the direction of VDH and abiding by VDH volunteer policies. (Virginia Code 2.2-1837 and 2.2-1840)

- This includes up to $2 million in Tort/Medical Malpractice Liability and up to $10,000 for medical payment claims.

APPENDIX C — USING THE VIRGINIA VOLUNTEER HEALTH SYSTEM (VVHS)

VVHS is a web-based system used to register, credential, track, and communicate with volunteers interested in assisting with public health activities during emergencies. Current volunteers are required to keep their VVHS profile up-to-date.

1. To log in to your VVHS account, go to http://vamrc.org, then click "VA Volunteer Health System."

2. Enter your userID and password and click "Sign In."

3. The Dashboard, or welcome screen, is pictured below. To access your account information, click "My Account" in the top right corner of the screen.

4. You are able to view your account information and volunteer activity by clicking on the tabs shown below.

5. To update your personal information, click the "Contact Information" tab and click the "edit" button located to the right of the corresponding field.

6. To update your credentials, click the "Credentials" tab and click the "edit" button located to the right of the corresponding field. Please include your driver's license number and medical license number (if applicable). We use your driver's license number to identify you if you do not have your MRC badge when checking in for assignment. We verify your medical license (if applicable) through the Department of Health Professions.

7. The MRC Coordinator or designee will contact you via VVHS e-mail alerts. To view event details, click the link within the body of the e-mail.

8. Once you have clicked the link, you will be able to respond to the alert by selecting your availability on the webpage. You may also have the option to select a shift(s), if several shift options are available.

9. You may also receive alerts by phone. The phone number for these alerts is **(804) 864-7200**. Save this number as VVHS or MRC Alerts in your contact book. All phone alerts will begin with, "This is a message from the Virginia Volunteer Health System…"

10. You may also receive alerts via text message on your mobile device. Text alerts will prompt you to check your e-mail for details. A text message alert may look like this:
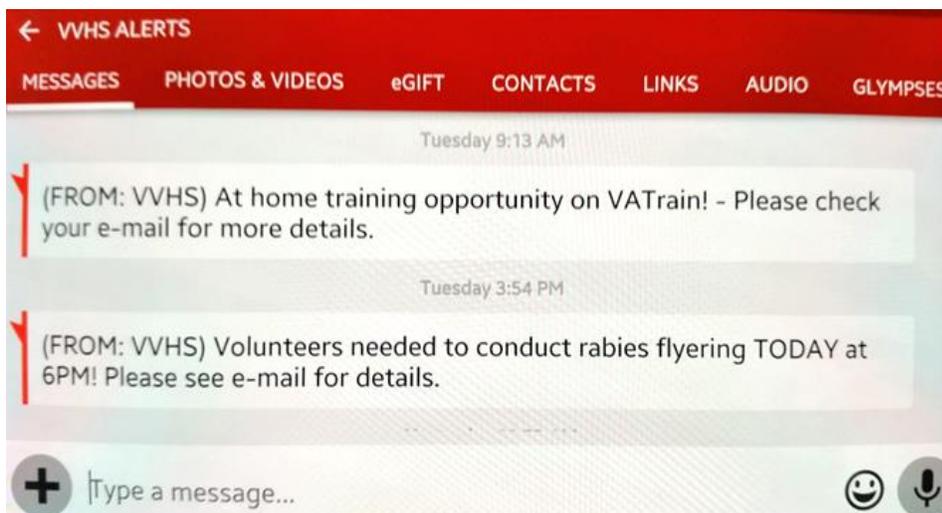
11. In the event that you forget your UserID or password, click the "Trouble Logging In?" button. You may also contact the MRC Coordinator for assistance with your VVHS account.

APPENDIX D — SETTING UP TRAIN ACCOUNT

NEW VVHS/TRAIN ACCOUNT

1. When you sign up for VVHS, an account is automatically set up for you in TRAIN VA. To log in to your new account, go to https://va.train.org. Click on "Can't log in?"

2. In the next screen, enter the email address you used to establish your VVHS profile.

3. An email should be sent to you with your username and instructions on how to establish your password. If you receive an email stating you do not have an account, you will need to create a new account in TRAIN VA.

CREATING NEW TRAIN VA ACCOUNT

1. Go to www.traing.org/virginia and click on "Create an Account"

2. On the following screen, enter your information and select a password. IMPORTANT: Be sure to use the same email address you used to set up your VVHS account. Click "next"
3. On the following screen you will select your job role and establish which agency you are affiliated with. Follow these steps:
4. The "Select Job Role" dropdown menu asks if you are a certified EMS provider. Select the appropriate answer.
5. From the "Select Agency/Industry" dropdown menu, choose "State Agency." This will prompt a "Select Office or Department" dropdown menu to appear.
6. Choose "Department of Health" from the "Select Office or Department" dropdown menu. This will prompt another "Select Office or Department" dropdown menu to appear.
7. Choose "Virginia Health Districts" from the second "Select Office or Department" menu.

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8. Finally, select "Alexandria Health District" then "Alexandria City" for the remaining dropdown menus.
9. Choose your appropriate job role from the dropdown menu.
10. Select up to three professional roles that best match your profession, and choose a specialization if applicable.
11. Select up to three work settings that best match your work environment.
12. Select your demographic information, enter your FEMA SID and other training credentials (optional) and click "Create Account". You will receive an email from TRAIN VA to confirm your account.

FINDING COURSES

Once you have successfully logged in to TRAIN VA, you can search for courses.
1. Log in to TRAIN VA.
2. Click "Course Catalog" tab at the top of screen.
3. Search for courses using the title or number of the course.
4. To register for a course click the green "+Register" button. To save a course to complete later, click the blue "Save for Later" button.
5. To help guide online training, an online Alexandria MRC Volunteer Training Plan is available here: https://www.train.org/virginia/training_plan/3508
6. To view courses you've completed, click "Your Learning" at the top of the screen.

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APPENDIX E — STEPS TO PERSONAL PREPAREDNESS

Disasters can strike quickly and without warning. They may force you to evacuate your neighborhood or require that you shelter in place inside your home. Disasters can also interrupt basic services like water, gas, electricity, and telephones. Local officials and relief workers may not be able to assist everyone who needs help in the aftermath of disaster. Families can cope with disaster by preparing in advance and working together as a team.

Follow the steps listed here to create your family's disaster plan. For additional preparedness information, visit https://www.ready.gov/. Knowing what to do is your best protection and your responsibility!

Prepare a Plan—prepare your disaster plan and review it with family members and contacts

- Meet with your family to discuss why you need to prepare for disaster. Plan to share responsibilities and work together as a team if a disaster occurs.
- Discuss the types of disasters that are most likely to happen in your community and how you will respond (e.g., evacuate; shelter in place; or drop, cover, and hold on). Explain to children the dangers of fire, severe weather, earthquakes, etc.
- Familiarize yourself with disaster response and recovery services available in your community such as healthcare facilities, CERT, the American Red Cross, etc.
- Familiarize yourself with your work and children's school emergency plans.

Be Prepared—learn how to respond and prepare your supplies in advance

- Teach children how and when to call 9-1-1 for emergency help.
- Have a fire extinguisher and know how to use it.
- Install smoke detectors on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms.
- Determine the best escape routes from your home. Know at least two ways out.
- Find the safe places in your home for each type of disaster that would require you to shelter in place.
- Inspect your home at least once a year and fix potential hazards. Hazards are things that could fall, break, or injure someone during a disaster or that could cause a fire.
- Get to know your utilities.
    o Locate the main electric fuse box, water service main, and natural gas main.
    o Ensure that each family member knows how and when to turn off these utilities.
    o Keep necessary tools near gas and water shut-off valves.
- Ensure that you have adequate insurance coverage.
- Take a CPR/First Aid course.
- If applicable, know how you will take care of your pets in the event of a disaster.
- Stock emergency supplies and assemble a disaster supplies kit. Store supplies in a sturdy, easy-to-carry container such as a backpack, duffle bag, or plastic bin. Keep a smaller kit in the trunk of your car. Recommended emergency supplies include:
    - A three-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and non-perishable food
    - One change of clothing and footwear per person (season appropriate)

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- A first aid kit that includes your family's prescription medications
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio, flashlight, and extra batteries
- Emergency tools including wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask or cotton t-shirt to help filter air
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape to seal windows, doors, etc.
- An extra set of car keys and a credit card, cash (small bills), or traveler's checks
- Personal hygiene items
- Sanitary supplies (disinfectant, moist towelettes, garbage bags, etc.)
- Special items for infants, seniors, or family members with special needs (if applicable)
- Pet supplies (if applicable)
- Important family documents such as health records, birth certificates, passports, and insurance policies (keep in a waterproof container such as a Ziploc bag).
- One blanket or sleeping bag per person
- Rain gear
- Paper and pencil
- Waterproof matches
- Tent
- Maps

Keep in Touch—plan how your family will stay in contact if separated by disaster

- Pick two meeting places: 1) a location a safe distance from your home in case of a sudden emergency, like a fire and 2) outside of your neighborhood in case you cannot return home. Everyone must know the locations of both meeting places.
- Choose an out-of-state friend or family member to be your "check-in contact" for everyone to call. After a disaster, it is often easier to call long distance than to call locally. Family members should call this person and tell them where they are. Everyone must know your check-in contact's phone number.
- Post emergency telephone numbers by phones (i.e., fire, police, poison control, etc.).
- Give everyone in the family a copy of emergency telephone numbers to keep with them and program into cell phones.
- Assign the phone number of your emergency contact to the name "ICE" (In Case of Emergency) on your cell phone to make it easier for emergency responders to reach the right person if you are injured

Practice Your Plan—exercise and evaluate your plan every six months

- Hold emergency drills with all household members at least two times each year.
- Show each family member how and when to turn off the utilities (water, gas, electricity).
- Keep contact information current.
- Update emergency kits to reflect the changing needs of family members (e.g., replace changes of clothes for size or season appropriateness)

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- Replace stored water and food supplies.
- Test fire extinguisher(s), smoke detectors, and batteries and recharge, refresh, or replace as needed.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors—working with neighbors can save lives and property

- Meet with your neighbors to plan how the neighborhood could work together until help arrives following a disaster.
- If you are a member of a neighborhood organization, such as a homeowners' association, introduce disaster preparedness as a new activity.
- Know your neighbors' special skills (e.g., medical, technical) and consider how you could help neighbors who have special needs, such as seniors or neighbors with a disability.
- Make plans for childcare in case parents cannot get home.

If Disaster Strikes

- Remain calm and patient. Put your plan into action.
- Check for injuries. Give first aid and get help for seriously injured people by calling 911.
- Listen to your radio for news and instructions.
- Evacuate immediately using specified travel routes if advised to do so by authorities.
- If evacuating, take your disaster supplies kit and lock your home.
- If instructed to shelter in place, do so immediately.
- Wear protective, seasonally appropriate clothing and sturdy shoes.
- Shut off water, gas, and electricity if you suspect damaged lines or you are instructed to do so. If you turn the gas off, you will need a professional to turn it back on.
- Do not light matches or turn on electrical switches, if you suspect damage to utility lines.
- If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve, open windows, and get everyone outside quickly.
- Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, gasoline, and other flammable liquids immediately.
- Confine or secure your pets.
- Call your long distance contact. Avoid using the telephone again unless it is a life-threatening emergency.
- Check on your neighbors, especially seniors or neighbors with a disability.
- Make sure you have an adequate water supply in case service interrupted.
- Stay away from downed power lines.

Alexandria Medical Reserve Corps