

*Calcasieu*



*Calcasieu Medical Reserve Corps (CMRC)  
Volunteer Handbook*

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## **1. History of the CMRC**

The National Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Program was launched in July 2002 by the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General in response to President George W. Bush's call for Americans to offer volunteer services in their community. The objective of the MRC program is to create a national network of local, community-based groups of medical, public health, and other volunteers who are organized and utilized to prepare for and respond to all-hazards, as well as to provide public health support throughout the year. At the national level, the Office of the Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps facilitates efforts to establish and implement local MRC units across the country (Public Law (PL) 107-188, the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002, Section 107).

Beginning May 1<sup>st</sup> 2006, the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury, Lake Charles, LA, funded the Calcasieu Medical Reserve Corps (CMRC) program. CMRC is housed in the Lake Charles Red Cross building and managed by Calcasieu Parish Office of Community Services and the Human Services Department.

During man-made or natural disasters, the CMRC will be activated under the direction of the Office Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (OHSEP). During non-disaster times, the CMRC will be activated and mobilized based on community requests, interests and need. CMRC will seek partnerships with other organizations that may enhance training and sustainability.

## **2. Vision**

The vision of the CMRC is to enhance emergency preparedness and response capabilities by supplementing existing response infrastructures in local communities across Calcasieu Parish.

## **3. Mission Statement**

The mission of the CMRC is to identify, organize, train, and sustain a cadre of medical, public health, and community volunteers who will contribute their skills and expertise to emergency preparedness, response, and recovery efforts during times of community need and in ongoing public health efforts.

## **4. Program Policies**

### **4.1 Confidentiality Statement**

The CMRC is committed to respecting the privacy of volunteers and protecting the confidentiality of personal information. Confidential information obtained by the CMRC will not be used for furthering any private interest, or as a means of personal gain. Anyone with access to volunteer information will take proper precautions for preventing unintentional disclosure of confidential information. Information gained through the CMRC database, deployment records, privileged communications, volunteer applications, or other avenues is considered confidential and disclosure by staff can result in civil or criminal penalties.

### **4.2 Equal Opportunity Statement**

The CMRC extends equal opportunity to individuals who meet the membership requirements and complete the CMRC orientation, and agree to adhere to the guidelines established in this handbook, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, or disability.

### **4.3 Application Requirements**

To be eligible for membership in the CMRC, applicants must:

- Be a citizen of the United States of America or a legal/registered immigrant
- Be at least 18 years of age  
*\*SerVice hour volunteers may be high school or college students pursuing mandatory service hours and will not be issued an id or uniform.*
- Provide current mailing address, contact information, date of birth, and Social Security or Passport number via completion of the online application
- Give the CMRC permission to conduct a criminal history check and verify credentials if applicable
- Allow a photo to be taken and kept on file

### **4.4 Volunteer Requirements**

The CMRC has established minimum requirements that all volunteers must meet. Volunteers must:

- Complete the CMRC required trainings
- Satisfactorily complete a Criminal History Investigation

- Provide accurate and verifiable Licensure and Certification information if applicable

#### **4.5 Background Checks**

Criminal history investigations may be conducted upon application, and every 5 years thereafter. Volunteers are required to notify the CMRC program office of any change in criminal history. The CMRC reserves the right to examine a volunteer's background and criminal history at any time.

#### **4.6 Licensure and Credentialing**

Licensed medical professionals volunteering in a medical capacity must supply the CMRC with all of the following information:

- License numbers and expiration dates
- Name of the institution issuing the medical degree or credential
- Date of graduation
- Employment history

The volunteer is responsible for notifying the CMRC program office of any change in licensure status.

#### **4.7 CMRC Database and Website**

The Louisiana Volunteers in Action (LAVA) site, a statewide ESAR-VHP compliant system, is administered by the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Public Health. By way of a Memo of Agreement, the LAVA site serves as the Calcasieu Medical Reserve Corps' volunteer registry. LAVA works to recruit, credential, train, manage and deploy volunteers (medical and non-medical) to assist during emergencies and day-to-day activities by providing additional staff to meet health/medical surge needs. The LAVA website, [www.lava.dhh.louisiana.gov](http://www.lava.dhh.louisiana.gov), provides volunteers access to statewide information and opportunities for training, activities, events and response

#### **4.8 Civil Liability Coverage**

The State of Louisiana provides limited liability coverage to the extent allowed by LA law to any CMRC volunteer if utilized by the state to assist with drills, exercises, emergencies, etc. This coverage applies only under these circumstances and specifically provides protection for volunteers acting in good faith and within the scope of their license. Any CMRC volunteer who self-deploys will not have liability protection.

- *La. R.S. 9: 2792.3, Non-profit volunteers*

*A person who serves as a director, officer, trustee or volunteer worker for a non-profit organization is not individually liable for an act or omission resulting in damage or injury arising out of the exercise of judgment in their duties. This applies if the person was acting in good faith and within the scope of his official duties. Exceptions: damage or injury caused by willful or wanton misconduct*

## **4.9 Workers' Compensation**

Volunteers are not protected by Louisiana's Workers' Compensation laws and are advised of this policy during the CMRC Orientation.

## **4.10 Identification Badges**

All approved CMRC volunteers will receive an identification badge. Before a new badge is issued, the CMRC may conduct a new background check and credential verification. Contact your local unit coordinator for details.

CMRC IDs are the property of the CMRC program and must be returned to the program office upon termination of the volunteer's relationship with the CMRC.

## **4.11 Uniforms**

The CMRC provides volunteers with an identification badge, lanyard, and shirt identifying them as a verified member of the CMRC. Volunteers should present their CMRC badge and wear their CMRC response shirt when responding on behalf of the program.

## **4.12 Communications**

Ongoing communication with volunteers is a critical component of the CMRC program. Please update your volunteer profile regularly to ensure you stay informed of CMRC program information, activities, and deployments.

### *4.12.1 Regular Communication*

CMRC Unit Coordinators will notify volunteers of new opportunities and share information using various forms of communications. Regular communications are conducted via call downs, e-mail, phone, social media and the U.S. Postal Service.

### *4.12.2 Emergency Notification*

When appropriate, CMRC Administration will alert CMRC members about the status of emergency situations, most often by e-mail. This gives the volunteer a sense of what has occurred and the potential for CMRC's involvement in the

response. During the notification phase, volunteers will likely be asked to indicate their availability in order to expedite the deployment process should activation become necessary. On-going alerts are disseminated as the situation warrants.

In the event of a public health or medical emergency where CMRC volunteers are being activated the following systems will be used to contact you:

- Automated phone notification system
- e-mail
- Mass media
- Social media

## **5. Policies for Volunteers**

### **5.1 Enrollment**

Prospective volunteers must complete the CMRC application found online at [www.lava.dhh.louisiana.gov](http://www.lava.dhh.louisiana.gov). If an individual does not have access to the Internet, they may contact their local CMRC unit for assistance.

### **5.2 Orientation**

Applicants are encouraged to complete the CMRC Orientation before their application is processed. Volunteers will be notified of scheduled CMRC Orientations.

### **5.3 Training**

The CMRC has implemented a statewide multi-tier training curriculum, incorporating the Core Competencies Matrix developed by the national MRC. This curriculum has been designed to provide all CMRC volunteers with a common level of basic training, and allow individual MRC units to develop training specific to local resources and responses. This standardized training curriculum will ensure a corps of medical, public health, and community volunteers are ready to augment and assist local emergency response personnel during medical and public health emergency operations.

<b>Tier 1: Identifies four basic trainings, which are appropriate for all volunteers. CMRC Orientation is required prior to processing your application. Completion of all is required within one year of joining the CMRC.</b>			
<b>CMRC Orientation</b>	<b>Family first: Making a Family Emergency Plan</b>	<b>FEMA IS-100a Incident Command System (ICS)</b>	<b>FEMA IS-700a National Incident Management System (NIMS)</b>
<b>RC Shelter Simulation</b>	<b>RC Disaster Health Services</b>	<b>RC Disaster Mental Health</b>	
<b>Tier II: Identifies training, which is desirable for all volunteers but not required. Specific agencies may require a Tier II course for deployment.</b>			
<b>CPR/First Aid</b>	<b>FEMA IS- 200 ICS for Single Resources (Online)</b>	<b>Core Disaster Life Support (CDLS)/Basic Disaster Life Support (BDLS)</b>	<b>Psychological First Aid (PFA)</b>
<b>CERT training</b>	<b>PHEONIX training</b>	<b>LINKS training</b>	
<b>Tier III: Consists of agency or deployment specific training thus allowing each community to tailor training to their unique needs. For example, the Parish Health Dept. may offer trainings to meet their mass immunization needs.</b>			
<b>Health Dept. Specific Training</b>	<b>Hospital Specific Training</b>	<b>Shelter Response Specific Training</b>	<b>Mental Health Specific Training</b>
<b>Tier IV: Courses designed to enhance knowledge of disasters and may include professional discipline specific content.</b>			
<b>Catastrophic Public Health Emergencies</b>	<b>Scarce Resources -Adapting Standards of Care in a Disaster</b>	<b>Functional Needs Populations</b>	<b>Cultural Competency</b>
<b>Traumatic Grief</b>	<b>Mass Casualty Triage</b>	<b>FEMA IS 300, IS 400, NIMS 800</b>	

Just-in-Time Training is a streamlined on-scene training generally offered to volunteers just prior to deployment. It is job specific, and conducted to train personnel to immediately perform and function within a response. Should a volunteer assignment require training specific to the requesting agency, the requesting agency is required to provide volunteers with such training.

CMRC volunteers are responsible for maintaining their own training records and certificates. Volunteers who do not complete Tier I training may be deemed inactive.

## 5.4 Expectations and Involvement

Membership in the CMRC is voluntary. Volunteers are encouraged, but not required, to participate in all planned meetings, exercises, and trainings that

support emergency preparedness efforts and public health initiatives in their local community

## **5.5 HIPAA**

All CMRC volunteers are required to abide by the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996, regardless of their volunteer role within the organization. Volunteers must also review and sign the CMRC Confidential Information Policy prior to participating in CMRC activities.

## **5.6 Code of Conduct**

Members of the CMRC serve as ambassadors for the CMRC program. When acting on behalf of the CMRC, volunteers should conduct themselves in a professional manner. Examples of conduct unbecoming a CMRC volunteer include, but are not limited to the list below. Other actions not listed herein but deemed illegal, immoral, indecent, obscene, or discrediting to the CMRC program, may result in dismissal:

- Sexual harassment of any kind
- Physical or verbal aggression
- Use or possession of illegal substances
- Use of alcohol during working hours
- Falsification or misrepresentation of credentials
- Discourteous or disrespectful language including profanity
- Violation of safety rules
- Performance of unsafe work practices
- Threatening, intimidating, or coercing of others
- Divulging confidential information
- Misuse, damage, or destruction of property

## **5.7 Termination of Membership**

Membership in the CMRC is voluntary, and this relationship may be terminated at any time by the CMRC program or by the individual volunteer. Volunteers who decide to terminate their membership in the CMRC are asked to do the following:

- Contact your local unit coordinator and advise them of your termination.
- If possible, the courtesy of two weeks' notice is requested.
- Return the ID badge, lanyard, and CMRC T-shirt(s).
- Participate in an exit interview, if possible.

## 6. Volunteer Utilization

CMRC volunteers will have opportunities to participate in activities other than response. These activities provide volunteers with training and experience, as well as promoting the organization in local communities. Examples of non-emergency activities include:

- Exercises (drills, tabletops, functional, or full-scale)
- Public awareness campaigns
- Vaccination clinics (flu, etc.)
- Public health education events
- CMRC recruitment events
- Special projects
- Community sponsored events
- Administrative support

### 6.1 Mass Vaccination/Mass Dispensing Clinics

The CMRC will augment existing agencies to help staff a Mass Immunization/Prophylaxis Strategy clinic. The purpose of this clinic is to provide preventive medication to a large population in a short amount of time. Key components of each clinic will include:

- Traffic control
- Crowd control
- Security
- Triage for ill or contact
- Contact evaluation
- « Orientation video rooms
- Forms distribution
- Forms review
- Medical screeners
- Physician evaluators
- Vaccinators/Witnesses
- Vaccine preparation
- Medical records
- Data entry
- IT support
- Supply management
- Staff support
- Counselors/Educator

## 6.2 Emergency Activation

The CMRC provides support for incident response by augmenting medical and public health personnel when local resources are overwhelmed or exhausted. The CMRC will not act as a freestanding medical resource and should be directly integrated into the overall local Incident Command System structure. Activation of the CMRC will be driven by a public health or medical response and will depend upon the size, scope, and nature of an incident. Local response remains priority for local units and response needs are determined at the local level. Local Unit Coordinators or their designee will contact volunteers who have indicated a willingness to respond.

CMRC volunteers will be used according to their training and capabilities. Self-deployment is strictly prohibited and can negatively affect overall response. CMRC volunteers should not report to a disaster scene or staging area without confirmation of their deployment from CMRC administration. Only verified CMRC volunteers responding to an official activation by city, county, or state health departments are covered by the stated liability laws.

## 6.3 Volunteer Accountability

The tracking of volunteer participation at CMRC functions, trainings, or events helps the CMRC Program to plan, document, and evaluate volunteer involvement. During a response, personnel accountability is crucial to ensuring the safety of CMRC volunteers. Volunteers must adhere to the following deployment rules:

- Never self deploy under any circumstances.
- © Report to the local staging area and sign in and out for all scheduled shifts.
- Any additional shifts must be assigned through the CMRC coordinator.

## 6.4 Incident Command

Under Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5), the Federal Government has created the National Incident Management System (NIMS). This integrated system establishes a uniform set of processes, protocols, and procedures that all emergency responders, at every level of government, will use to conduct response actions. The CMRC has adopted the NIMS guidelines, and responses will be managed under the organizational structure set forth in Incident Command System (ICS) protocols. ICS provides structured management and communications, allowing smooth expansion and contraction of incident response. CMRC volunteers deployed for emergency events will be integrated into an existing ICS structure of the requesting agencies/organizations and should operate in accordance with ICS principles.

### 6.4.1 How ICS Applies To You

- Report to only one person.
- Stay within assigned role.
- All media requests must be coordinated through the designated Public Information Officer (PIO).

### 6.4.2 ICS Scene Safety Tips

- Follow the pre-established Incident Command System Structure.
- Let your supervisor know when you need a break.
- Never enter a scene, POD, or clinic site without first notifying your supervisor.
- As part of the reporting structure, you should not start a new role, leave your previous role, or leave the site without first speaking with your supervisor.

## 6.5 What to Expect During Activation

When an incident occurs and CMRC assistance is requested, the Administration Team will provide as much information as possible before you report for duty. It is important to wait for official notification of CMRC activation and deployment. During this time, the appropriate information about where and when to report will be provided.

### 6.5.1 When activation is confirmed and your assistance is requested

- Refer to the deployment checklist and evaluate your ability to respond, including physical, mental, and financial fitness
- If medications are being provided to the public, deploying volunteers will receive enough preventative medication or vaccine for themselves and their families
- Consider modes of transportation
- Notify family / activate your family emergency plan if needed
- Report at the time and place specified

### 6.5.2 Deployment Checklist

- Wear comfortable clothing, long pants, and closed toe shoes. The CMRC T-shirt is the uniform for all responses.
- Bring a backpack or small bag with personal items (e.g. medication, glasses, and snacks).
- Do bring your CMRC ID card and another form of identification, such as a driver's license, to all responses.
- If you have a medical license, bring a copy with you during initial check-in.

- Do not bring valuables or weapons.

It is critical that response volunteers do not increase the burden placed on an already overstressed infrastructure. During a deployment, you must be self-sufficient; and provide your own transportation, meals, water, and other necessities unless otherwise notified. The CMRC Unit leaders will be available at all times during any deployment to assist you any way we can.

#### *6.5.4 Things to Remember*

- Your decision to participate in response efforts is voluntary. While the CMRC greatly appreciates every volunteer who responds to a request, if doing so will adversely affect you physically, mentally, or financially, consider declining the request. There will be opportunities in the future to respond.
- CMRC volunteers are provided the appropriate training before a response and should never be asked to perform duties for which they are not licensed or that they feel uncomfortable doing. If you ever feel uncomfortable with an assigned task, tell your supervisor immediately and inform your CMRC Unit Coordinator as soon as possible.
- Do not attempt to complete a task you are not capable of doing, or are not licensed/trained to do.

Like most successful volunteer programs, our most valuable asset is you-the volunteer! Your commitment to making Calcasieu Parish and Louisiana a better prepared, more resilient community and state is greatly appreciated; and will benefit generations to come. The CMRC is growing, thanks to the numerous and unique contributions of its members. Regardless of the amount of time, you are able to offer; you are a valued member of the CMRC team.

**Thank you for volunteering!**

# Volunteer Agreement

Please initial each item below.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have received the CMRC Handbook.

I have read and have understood the handbook.

I agree to uphold the standards of the CMRC and to comply with the Code of Conduct at all times.

Volunteer Name (Printed)

Volunteer Signature

Date

Witness Name (Printed)

Witness Signature

Date

## DICTIONARY OF COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS

ACRONYM	DEFINITION
MR/IP	After Action Report/Improvement Plan
ARC	American Red Cross
ASPR	Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response
CBO	Community Based Organizations
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CHE	Catastrophic Health Emergency
COOP	Continuity of Operations Plan
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DMAT	Disaster Medical Assistance Team
DMORT	Disaster Mortuary Teams
EMAC	Emergency Management Assistance Compact
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
ESF	Emergency Support Function
FBO	Faith Based Organizations
FE	Functional Exercise
FOG	Field Operations Guide
FOUO	For Official Use Only
FSE	Full-Scale Exercise *
IAP	Incident Action Plan
ICS	Incident Command System
JIC	Joint Information Center
JIS	Joint Information System
JITT	Just-in-Time-Training
JOC	Joint Operations Center
MERC	Medical Emergency Response Center
MIPS	Mass Immunization/Prophylaxis Strategy
MMRS	Metropolitan Medical Response Systems
MRC	Medical Reserve Corps
NDMS	National Disaster Medical System
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NIPP	National Infrastructure Protection Plan
NRF	National Response Framework
OEP	Office of Emergency Preparedness
GOHSEP	Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness
COAD	Calcasieu Organizations Active in Disasters
PIO	Public Information Officer or Information Officer
POD	Point of Dispensing (Health Use)
POD	Point of Distribution (FEMA Use)
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
RMRS	Regional Medical Response System
SA	Salvation Army
SITRM	Situation Room
SNS	Strategic National Stockpile
TALON	Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and New Mexico (HHS Region VI)
TCL	Target Capabilities List
TTX	Tabletop Exercise