

SEACOAST MEDICAL  
RESERVE CORPS  
VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



2018-2019

Seacoast Public Health Network  
Volunteer Handbook

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## Welcome

Dear Seacoast Medical Reserve Corps/CERT Volunteer:

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

The Seacoast Public Health Network covers 23 towns; Brentwood, East Kingston, Epping, Exeter, Fremont, Greenland, Hampton, Hampton Falls, Kensington, Kingston, New Castle, Newfields, Newington, Newmarket, Newton, North Hampton, Nottingham, Raymond, Rye, Portsmouth, Seabrook, South Hampton and Stratham; however, our volunteers come from many towns throughout New Hampshire. Volunteers are needed to donate their time and talents to help local citizens in major emergencies and/or disasters, as well as support local health initiatives. We need volunteers to accomplish all of our goals. Thank you so much for making the MRC part of your volunteer activities.

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

Sincerely,

Seacoast Public Health Network Team

### About This Handbook

Your enrollment and orientation are important first steps to an exciting and rewarding volunteer experience which offers a variety of opportunities to serve your community. The following pages describe the benefits to our volunteers, in addition to policies and procedures that provide a framework for the services we deliver.

The information in this handbook is extensive but not complete. Each position has policies and procedures specific to the function you will perform.

You will learn much of the information regarding your responsibilities on the job. Please take the time to read this handbook carefully. Then, sign and return the documents in Appendix A,B, and D.

We wish you a rewarding experience as a volunteer.

## History of Citizen Corps

### *Uniting Communities - Preparing the Nation*

In his 2002 State of the Union Message, President George W. Bush called on all Americans to make a lifetime commitment of at least 4,000 hours—the equivalent of two years of their lives—to serve their communities, the nation and the world. President Bush announced the creation of **USA Freedom Corps** to help Americans answer his call to service and to foster a culture of service, citizenship and responsibility.

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

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

The Community Emergency Response Team concept was developed and implemented by the Los Angeles City Fire Department (LAFD) in 1985. The Whittier Narrows earthquake in 1987 underscored the area-wide threat of a major disaster in California. Further, it confirmed the need for training civilians to meet their immediate needs. As a

result, the LAFD created the Disaster Preparedness Division with the purpose of training citizens and private and government employees.

The training program that LAFD initiated makes good sense and furthers the process of citizens understanding their responsibility in preparing for disaster. It also increases their ability to safely help themselves, their family and their neighbors. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recognizes the importance of preparing citizens. The Emergency Management Institute (EMI) and the National Fire Academy adopted and expanded the CERT materials believing them applicable to all hazards.

The CERT course will benefit any citizen who takes it. This individual will be better prepared to respond to and cope with the aftermath of a disaster. Since 1993 when this training was made available nationally by FEMA, communities in 28 States and Puerto Rico have conducted CERT training.

The Seacoast Medical Reserve Corps/CERT is one of thirty-four Citizen Corps in the state of New Hampshire.

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

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

We are funded with grants from the NH Citizen Corps program and from NACCHO (National Association of City and County Health Officials).

*Mission of the Seacoast Medical Reserve Corps/CERT*

The mission of the Seacoast Medical Reserve Corps/CERT are to recruit, train, deploy, and retain volunteer health professionals and others who will contribute their skills and expertise in response to threats of terrorism, public health emergencies, and other community needs.

*Vision Statement*

The vision of the Seacoast Medical Reserve Corps/CERT is to enhance the regional medical and emergency response capability.

*Benefits to the Community*

Major local emergencies can overwhelm the capability of first responders, especially during the first 12-72 hours. Having citizens who are prepared to take care of themselves, their families and others during times of crisis will allow first-responders to focus their efforts on the most critical, life threatening situations.

An organized, well trained team means that volunteers can effectively respond to an emergency, are familiar with their community's response plan, know what materials are available for their use, know who their partners in the response are, and know where their skills can be utilized to their best advantage and in a coordinated manner.

**An Organized Team Approach**

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

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

**Background**

The Seacoast Medical Reserve Corps/CERT has developed its program by:



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1. Recruiting medical and non-medical volunteers from local hospitals, EMS, public health, and the community;
2. Creating a database containing all volunteer information, including credentials, contact information, etc;
3. Developing orientation, core competencies and training programs for volunteers; and
4. Creating partnerships with Emergency Management, Fire & Police First Responder Organizations, hospitals, and NH Department of Health and Human Services & Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

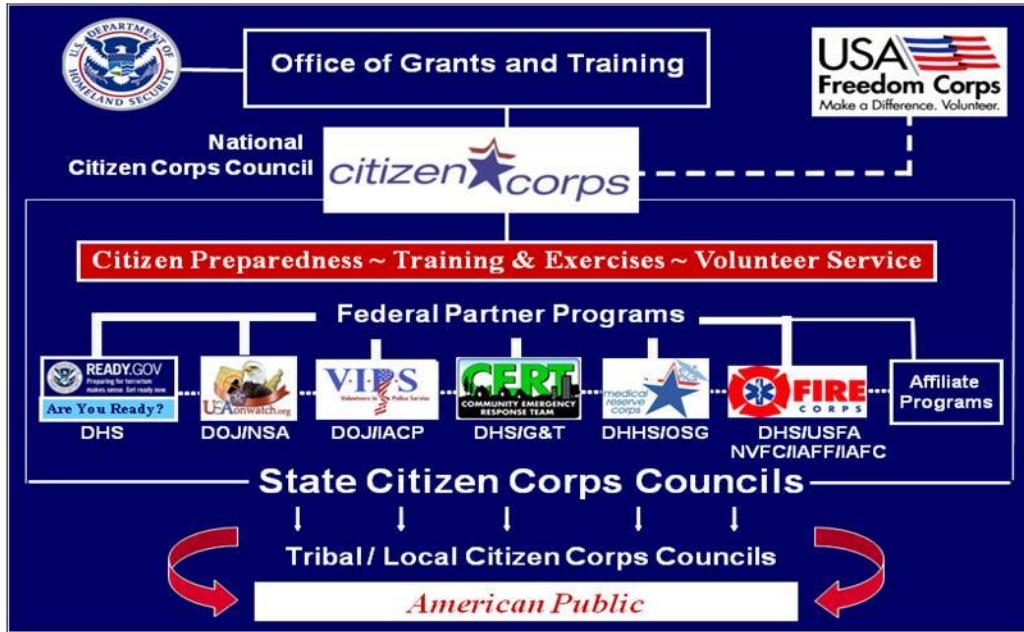
*Results and Benefits Expected*

Recruitment for the Seacoast Medical Reserve Corps/CERT will be community based and managed. They seek volunteers from various professional and non-professional backgrounds, including medical and non-medical, behavioral, public health, technical, foreign language speakers, and support staff. They will offer flexibility and allow volunteers to choose their desired level of participation and commitment.

Basic	Participation in Emergency/Disaster activations only. Verification of Credentials required. Completion of BASIC level training needed. (see training section)
Active	Participation in Emergency/Disaster activations and Community Health Initiatives. Verification of Credentials required. Completion of ACTIVE level training needed.

The Seacoast Medical Reserve Corps/CERT is incorporated into the Public Health Emergency Annex. All emergency and disaster related functions of the MRC will be initiated through the MACE (Multi-Area Coordinating Entity). The Seacoast Medical Reserve Corps/CERT will enhance and improve the emergency medical response capacity in the community. The program will enhance the region's ability to respond to either a natural hazard or a terrorism event and be the designated volunteer corps utilized to provide surge capacity during public health emergencies. For example, responses could include staffing mass vaccination or dispensing clinics, shelters, alternate care centers, family assistance centers or triage facilities. With advance planning and identification of treatment sites, as well as identifying certified and trained volunteers, a safe, rapid, and effective response will be available in a major emergency or disaster.

General Information



### *Length of Service*

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

### *Position Descriptions*

Position descriptions will be provided before or during activation. A position description outlines the general and specific duties that will be expected. It should also outline the training requirements needed to carry out assigned duties.

### *Volunteer Assignments*

Volunteer applications will be submitted to the Seacoast Medical Reserve Corps/CERT Volunteer Coordinator or Director for approval and credential verification. Copies of licenses, certifications, etc. are to be provided to the Coordinator in order to complete the application process. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to provide updated license and/or certification information as changes occur. This can also be completed thru the NHResponds.org website by clicking on ESAR-VHP. The State of NH will then check on credentials.

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

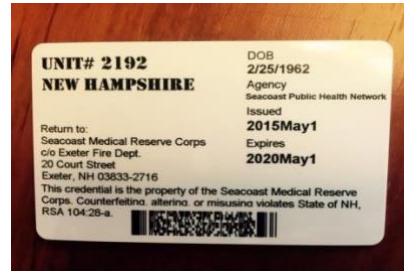
### *Identification – a work in progress!*

The Network has issued identification badges to each volunteer. An appointment can be made with the Director's office to have the picture taken. All volunteers must wear their badges and keep them visible during any activation. Badges remain the property of the Seacoast Public Health Network, and must be returned upon termination of

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volunteer membership. Volunteer membership may be terminated by either the volunteer or unit leadership. Examples are below:



Presently, identification by driver's license or another approved identification is required for participation in activations.

### *Volunteer Safety*

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

### *Maintaining Readiness*

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

While understanding that time constraints and scheduling conflicts will arise, it is anticipated that volunteers will follow the basic training plan referred to in this handbook. The trainings are geared specifically to address emergency situations that a volunteer may encounter when responding to either a man-made or natural disaster, and are designed to build upon the volunteer's existing expertise in their own field. The Seacoast Medical Reserve Corps/CERT has joined the National Citizen Corps and National Medical Reserve Corps in promoting some basic, but essential, core competencies that are critical components to having a trained and ready volunteer force.

All volunteers must have appropriate education, training and experience to fulfill the role of a volunteer. Not all members of the units will need the same level of education and training, although there are some common elements. For example, an RN who is giving flu shots at a community requires a different level of training as the support staff handling registrations.

The units may be trained to staff mass vaccination or dispensing clinics, staff alternate care facilities, provide public health surge capacity, assist in sheltering operations, etc.

Volunteers can only be as helpful as to the extent that they have prepared their families and homes in advance for emergency situations. Preparedness is each individual's responsibility. Ensuring you are prepared at home and at work will allow you to be ready to respond when you are needed. Other sources of information on preparedness include [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov) and [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov). You may also check the website of the Department of Emergency Management, National Medical Reserve Corps, [www.readynh.gov](http://www.readynh.gov) and the CDC for additional emergency preparedness information. In addition, see the Resources page on the Seacoast Public Health Network's website at [www.seacoastphr.org](http://www.seacoastphr.org).

### **Training**

Volunteers will be required to take the 20-hour CERT Community course that includes First Aid and CPR, Fire Safety, light Search and Rescue, Disaster Psychology, Incident Command Systems. Volunteers are required to take IS 100 and 700.

### **Funding**

Volunteer time is uncompensated. However, local municipalities or other agencies are responsible for supplies and other support during a disaster, which may include:

- Education and training
- Protective equipment and clothing
- Supplies
- Food

### **Emblem/Logo**

The Citizen Corps, CERT, and MRC logos are legally protected service marks and trademarks registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and are exclusively held by the U.S. Departments of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services. As owner of the marks, logos, and banners, the U.S. Departments of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services are legally responsible for protecting their trademarks, in all of its various forms and from any intentional and unintentional misuse. Specific prior approval must be obtained in writing for each individual use of the logos by applying to the Citizen Corps.

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

### **Web Site**

The Seacoast Public Health Network website is [www.seacoastphr.org](http://www.seacoastphr.org). Please review this site regularly for updates on trainings, meetings, and volunteer information. To register as a volunteer in our region, please go to this website, click on the Volunteer page, and then the NH Responds logo to complete your online registration or you can go directly to [www.nhresponds.org](http://www.nhresponds.org).

Once you have registered, you will receive all notifications of meetings, trainings, and activations by email, phone, and text messaging. This NH Responds Notification System is a web-based registration tool that is also a centralized clearinghouse for all volunteer health professionals in the State of New Hampshire.

All volunteers will receive notifications once registered through the NH Responds system.

### **Participation in Non-Emergency Events**

Volunteers may be notified, in advance, when any community event may require the need for volunteers such as health fairs, community events, flu clinics, etc. via the NH Responds notification system.

### **Program's Responsibilities to the Volunteer**

The Seacoast Public Health Network will work to provide a t-shirt or polo shirt upon completion of the CERT course.

The Seacoast Public Health Network will not share volunteers' contact information with outside sources. However, other regions may have access to this information in the event of an emergency for coordination purposes only.

The Seacoast Public Health Network will strive to provide volunteers with opportunities to work within their own fields of expertise during an emergency event.

### **Liability**

#### *The Volunteer Protection Act*

("VPA")(codified at 42 U.S.C. § 14501 et. seq.) Provides qualified immunity from liability for volunteers and, subject to exceptions, preempts inconsistent state laws on the subject, except for those that provide protections that are stronger than those contained in the VPA.

The VPA defines a volunteer as "an individual performing services for a nonprofit organization or a governmental entity which does not receive compensation" (other than reasonable reimbursement or allowance for expenses actually incurred); or any other thing of value in lieu of compensation, in excess of \$500 per year...." 42 U.S.C. § 14506(6).

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

#### *New Hampshire Liability Legislation*

- New Hampshire HB 618 (providing limited immunity to volunteers mobilized under governmental direction)

“In the absence of any mutual aid agreement or other similar written agreement that specifically addresses the issue of workers’ compensation benefits, any person who acts as an agent to the department of health and human services or the department of safety by providing assistance in response to a specific public health or public safety incident. Such person shall be deemed an employee of the state for the purposes of this chapter. In order to be eligible for workers’ compensation benefits under this chapter the person shall have been specifically designated in writing as an agent by the commissioner of the department of health and human services or the commissioner of the department of safety, or their respective designees, in accordance with the provisions of RSA 508:17-a. This subparagraph applies only to such designated agents who are not receiving compensation from either the department of health and human services or the department of safety, other than possible reimbursement for expenses actually incurred for such services, such as travel expenses, but who may be receiving compensation from his or her regular employer or from any other source.”

- New Hampshire RSA 508:17 Volunteers; Nonprofit Organizations; Liability Limited. –

I. Any person who is a volunteer of a nonprofit organization or government entity shall be immune from civil liability in any action brought on the basis of any act or omission resulting in damage or injury to any person if:

(a) The nonprofit organization or government entity has a record indicating that the person claiming to be a volunteer is a volunteer for such organization or entity; and

(b) The volunteer was acting in good faith and within the scope of his official functions and duties with the organization; and

(c) The damage or injury was not caused by willful, wanton, or grossly negligent misconduct by the volunteer.

I-a. [Repealed.]

II. Liability of a nonprofit organization for damage or injury sustained by any one person in actions brought against the organization alleging negligence on the part of an organization volunteer is limited to \$250,000. Such limit applies in the aggregate to any and all actions to recover for damage or injury sustained by one person in a single incident or occurrence. Liability of a nonprofit organization for damage or injury sustained by any number of persons in a single incident or occurrence involving negligence on the part of an organization volunteer is limited to \$1,000,000.



III. Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect any civil action brought by any nonprofit organization against any volunteer of such organization. IV.

Volunteer activity related to transportation or to care of the organization's premises shall be excepted from the provisions of paragraph I of this section.

V. In this section:

(a) "Damage or injury" includes physical, nonphysical, economic and noneconomic damage and property damage.

(b) "Nonprofit organization" shall include, but not be limited to, a not for profit organization, corporation, community chest, fund or foundation organized and operated exclusively for religious, cultural, charitable, scientific, recreational, literary, agricultural, or educational purposes, or to foster amateur competition in a sport formally recognized by the National Collegiate Athletic Association, and an organization exempt from taxation under section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 organized or incorporated in this state or having a principal place of business in this state.

(c) "Volunteer" means an individual performing services for a nonprofit organization or government entity who does not receive compensation, other than reimbursement for expenses actually incurred for such services. In the case of volunteer athletic coaches or sports officials, such volunteers shall possess proper certification or validation of competence in the rules, procedures, practices, and programs of the athletic activity.

- New Hampshire RSA 508:17-a Agents Assisting Certain State Departments; Liability Limited. –

I. Any person who acts as an agent to the department of health and human services or the department of safety by providing assistance in response to a specific public health or public safety incident shall be protected from claims and civil actions arising from acts committed within the scope of his or her official duty as an agent to such departments to the same extent as state officers, trustees, officials, employees, and members of the general court under RSA 99D, provided that:

(a) The commissioner of the department of health and human services or the commissioner of the department of safety has declared in writing to the governor that a public health or public safety incident exists;

(b) The department of health and human services or the department of safety has designated the person to act as its agent to assist in responding to the public health or public safety incident;

(c) The agent was acting in good faith and within the scope of his or her official functions and duties as an agent to the department of health and human services or the department of safety; and

(d) The damage or injury was not caused by willful, wanton, or grossly negligent misconduct by the agent.

II. In this section:

(a) "Agent" means any person who acts as an agent to the department of health and human services or the department of safety by providing assistance in response to a specific public health or public safety incident and the person does not receive compensation from either department, other than possible reimbursement for expenses actually incurred for such services, but who may be receiving compensation from his or her employer or from any other source.

(b) "Damage or injury" includes physical, nonphysical, economic and noneconomic damage, and property damage.

(c) "Public health or public safety incident" means a specific incident that the commissioner of the department of health and human services or the commissioner of the department of safety has declared in writing poses a threat to the health and safety of the public and demands a response that will require the assistance of agents from outside the state system, but which does not rise to the level that would necessitate the declaration of a state of emergency by the governor under RSA 4:45.

III. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be considered an agent of the department of health and human services or the department of safety for the purposes of this section unless the commissioner of one of those 2 departments has declared in writing to the governor that a public health or public safety incident exists and the appropriate department acknowledges in writing the person's status as an agent. Such written acknowledgment shall identify the person, indicate the department of the state for which the person will be acting as an agent, indicate the duration for which the person will be acting as an agent, indicate the functions that the person will be performing for the appropriate department, and specifically indicate that the provisions of this section apply to the person's status as an agent to the appropriate department.

IV. Any licensed health care provider who acts as an agent to the department of health and human services by providing health care or services in response to a public health incident shall work under the oversight of a department physician.

V. No disciplinary action shall be taken by a licensing board against a licensed health care provider who acted as an agent or a volunteer to the department of health and human services or the department of safety. This paragraph shall apply only to a health care provider who was designated by either the department of health and human services or the department of safety to act as an agent in accordance with paragraph III and who acted in good faith within

the scope of his or her official functions and duties as an agent, and who did not engage in willful, wanton, or grossly negligent conduct in the course of carrying out his or her official functions and duties.

## **Volunteer Rights & Responsibilities**

### *Volunteer Rights*

As a volunteer with the Seacoast Public Health Network, you enjoy the following rights:

- 1) Assignments that utilize and develop your skills;
- 2) Adequate information and training to carry out your assignments;
- 3) Clear and specific directions;
- 4) Recognition and appreciation for your contribution;
- 5) Opportunities to offer feedback and ask questions;
- 6) Regular feedback on your work;
- 7) Adequate space, equipment and supplies to perform your job; 8)  
The right to know as much about the organization as possible; 9)  
Respect in your work environment.
- 10) A chance to be part of a team and build skills and support.

### *Code of Conduct*

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

### *Volunteer Responsibilities*

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

**Seacoast Public Health Network** volunteers must:

- ✓ Be dependable, reliable, and businesslike, and abide by the policies of the **Seacoast Public Health Network**.
- ✓ Adhere at all times to the National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) Incident Command structure. Deviations from this command control system can have seriously negative effects on the outcome of the response to an event.
- ✓ Refrain from activating if using any medical prescription or other drug that has the potential to render them impaired, unfit, or unable to carry out their emergency assignment.
- ✓ Dress appropriately for the setting and the task at hand, and wear the proper identification badge, shirt, etc. at all events and activations.
- ✓ Carry out duties in a safe, responsible way.
- ✓ Inform the on-scene authorized official whether they are mentally and physically fit for their assigned duties. Volunteers reporting if not fit for currently assigned duties may request a less demanding assignment that is appropriate to their current capabilities.
- ✓ Possess the required liability insurance for any private vehicles, vessels, boats, or aircraft being used in any mission, training event, or other authorized activity unless specifically directed otherwise by an authorized official in accordance with current law.
- ✓ Maintain the confidentiality of information revealed to you regarding clients and coworkers.
- ✓ Keep track of the hours you work on the form provided and submit them to the Unit Team Leader or Volunteer Coordinator.
- ✓ Be amenable to serving all people regardless of race, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, or disability.
- ✓ Adhere to the guidelines of your job description/scope of practice.
- ✓ Check in and check out with the appropriate on-scene official when deploying to an incident.

- ✓ Offer feedback and suggestions.
- ✓ Be prepared for any regularly scheduled meetings.
- ✓ Represent the team appropriately in the community by knowing the mission of the Seacoast Medical Reserve Corps/CERT.
- ✓ Not authorize the use of or use for the benefit or advantage of any person, the name, emblem, endorsement, services, or property of the **Seacoast Public Health Network**.
- ✓ Not accept or seek on behalf of themselves or any other person, any financial advantage or gain of other than nominal value that may be offered because of the volunteer's affiliation with the **Seacoast Public Health Network**.
- ✓ Not publicly utilize any **Seacoast Public Health Network** affiliation in connection with the promotion of partisan politics, religious matters, or positions on any issue not in conformity with the official positions of the **Seacoast Public Health Network**.
- ✓ Not knowingly take any action or make any statement intended to influence the conduct of the **Seacoast Public Health Network** in such a way as to confer any financial benefit on any person, corporation, or entity in which the individual has a significant interest or affiliation.
- ✓ Not operate or act in any manner that is contrary to the best interests of the **Seacoast Public Health Network**.

#### *Performance*

Volunteers are expected to comply with the policies, procedures, and standards of the Seacoast Public Health Network as explained at the beginning of their assignment, at the volunteer orientation and in the volunteer handbook.

#### *Conflict Resolution*

If the Volunteer Coordinator is dissatisfied with a volunteer's performance, the first course of action is to communicate that concern to the volunteer. If they are unable to

reach an understanding, the MRC Director will attempt to resolve the matter. In most cases, a volunteer will be given sufficient time to respond affirmatively or request reassignment to a more suitable placement. In some cases, however, immediate action may be required depending upon the severity of the issue. The Seacoast Public Health Network will be the ultimate deciding body for all matters concerning the volunteers and organization.

## **Policies**

### *Harassment-Free Environment Policy*



The Seacoast Public Health Network is committed to providing a harassment and discrimination free work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment. It is the policy of the Seacoast Public Health Network that harassment based on race, color, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, disability, veteran status or any other basis is strictly prohibited.

Any harassment, whether verbal or physical, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It is the intent that all Seacoast Public Health Network volunteers will work in an environment free from discrimination and/or harassment by another employee, supervisor or another volunteer for any reason. Discriminatory conduct in any form undermines morale and interferes with productivity.

If you feel that you may have been the subject of discrimination or harassment, you should contact us. Any reports of discrimination or harassment will be examined impartially and resolved promptly. The Seacoast Public Health Network will determine the volunteer status of any volunteer found to be verbally or physically inappropriate during an activation, training or meeting of the unit teams.

### *Safety*

A healthy and safe work environment is an important part of the Seacoast Public Health Network. No job is considered to be so important or urgent that volunteers cannot take time to perform their job safely.

During activations, emergency management will assign a safety officer to oversee operations. The safety officer has the authority to order you to stop an activity. All volunteers are required to fully comply with the directions of the safety officer.

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

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

As a volunteer, you have a responsibility for your own safety and health. This includes using all required safety devices. You must also notify your supervisor of any physical conditions such as drowsiness due to medication, illness or emotional strain, which may affect your performance and safety.

You are expected to immediately report all work-related accidents and/or injuries to your Team Leader.

#### *Electronic Communications Policy*

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

#### *Drug Free Workplace*

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

#### *Violence-Free Work Environment Policy*

The Seacoast Public Health Network is committed to our volunteer's safety and health. This policy has been developed to help ensure a safe workplace and to reduce the risk of violence.

The Seacoast Public Health Network does not tolerate any type of acts or threats of violence committed by or against a volunteer, and therefore prohibit workplace violence. In order to ensure a safe working environment, the Seacoast Public Health Network prohibits all persons from carrying a handgun, firearm, or weapon of any kind during trainings or activations. If a volunteer is threatened while serving as a volunteer, he/she should immediately report the event to the Incident Commander or nearest person of authority (Team Leader, Supervisor, Safety Officer, Security/Police, etc.).

#### *Activation Policy*

The Seacoast Medical Reserve Corps/CERT can be fully or partially activated upon:

- A declaration by the governor of New Hampshire indicating that there is a state of emergency- public health or otherwise.
- A declaration by local elected officials.
- A declaration by the Governor or his/her designee that the Seacoast Public Health Network is needed for emergency or non-emergency activities.

As a local emergency medical resource, the Seacoast Public Health Network may be activated by:

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

#### Activation/Notification Procedure

Requests for volunteer assistance will be processed through the Seacoast Public Health Network as follows:

1. The requestor will contact the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Manager and notify them of the request for assistance. Contact information should be supplied so that the requestor may be reached for follow-up.



2. The Public Health Emergency Preparedness Manager or Volunteer Coordinator will notify the volunteers via the NH Responds Notification System.

Local officials requesting the activation of the Citizen Corps must provide the following information to the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator or his/her designee:

- 1) The nature and scope of the emergency.
- 2) The location of the emergency.
- 3) The estimated number of people involved.
- 4) The staging area(s) or location(s) to which the unit (s) is being deployed.
- 5) Specific medical skills and/or resources needed, i.e., physicians, nurses, etc.
- 6) Contact information, including phone number and/or radio frequency of person requesting resources as well as whom the volunteers report to at the responding location.

If the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Manager confirms that the assignment is appropriate, the activation process will commence.

In the event of a public health or medical emergency, volunteers will initially be notified via the NHResponds system. Depending on the situation, members will be informed of the nature of the emergency and may be instructed to report to designated areas. Response to volunteer notification will be tracked by the Volunteer Coordinator and/or the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Manager.

### Deployment Policy

Agencies may request deployment by contacting the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Manager and following the activation/notification procedure. Members should never self-deploy. Doing so could be grounds for dismissal. No unauthorized person or agency can deploy individual volunteers directly.

It is crucial to work strictly through the Seacoast Medical Reserve Corps/CERT for deployment requests for several reasons. This method of having a single point of contact ensures that:

- The call-out request is appropriate for the unit.
- Notifications are made through the most effective channels.
- Responses from members are tracked efficiently, with no duplication.
- The appropriate number and type of volunteers are dispatched.

- Members can be assigned at their optimum skill level and preferences.
- Teams of various specialties can be allocated as needed.
- Groups of members who trained together can offer maximum effectiveness.
- Resources are allocated wisely in the event of multiple requests.
- Members are provided with the relevant background and directions.
- Responders will arrive with the appropriate training and equipment.
- Member safety is ensured to the greatest degree possible.
- Activities of responders can be monitored, across multiple events.
- After-action reporting and feedback mechanisms are maintained.
- Follow-ups are initiated as appropriate.

Self-deployment, and the contacting of individual members apart from established channels, interferes with these desired outcomes.

If warranted, the volunteers may assemble at a pre-designated location and prepare for deployment to the emergency scene(s).

In the event that unaffiliated community volunteers respond to the scene to help, they will be directed to the volunteer reception area to be managed effectively according to the Incident Action Plan and/or Incident Commander's instructions.

### Demobilization and Outbriefing

The volunteers will support emergency medical, public health or hospital operations for the duration of an incident or as long as their assistance is required. It is possible that some unit personnel and resources may be demobilized before others as their assignments are completed. Unit members will demobilize along with other on-scene personnel and resources, in accordance with the Incident Action Plan and/or their Unit Leader's instructions.

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

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

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

Opportunities will be made available to meet with mental health professionals, if deployments warrant the need.

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

## **Recommended Items to Bring with you when activated locally**

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

### **Security Items:**

- Picture Identification such as a Driver's License
- MRC Badge (if applicable)

### **Clothing:**

*(It is important to be prepared for both indoor and outdoor working conditions)*

- MRC shirt
- Comfortable, light-weight clothing (*Think Layers!*)
- Long pants
- Long-sleeved shirts
- Hat
- Boots or comfortable walking shoes
- Warm jacket
- Rain gear

- Bandana/handkerchief
- Gloves (Leather gloves if physical labor will be performed or for warmth)

**Personal Items:**

- Cell Phone
- Sunglasses
- Nonperishable Snacks
- Bottle of water
- Sun block
- Lip balm
- Contact lenses, lens cleaner, and eye glasses protective case
- Anything else you would need in a 12-hour period, such as medications, etc.

**Appendix A:**  
**Confidentiality Statement**

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

**CONFIDENTIALITY PLEDGE**

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

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

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**Signature**

**Date**

**Appendix B:**

**Release for Publication of Photographs/Video Recordings**

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

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

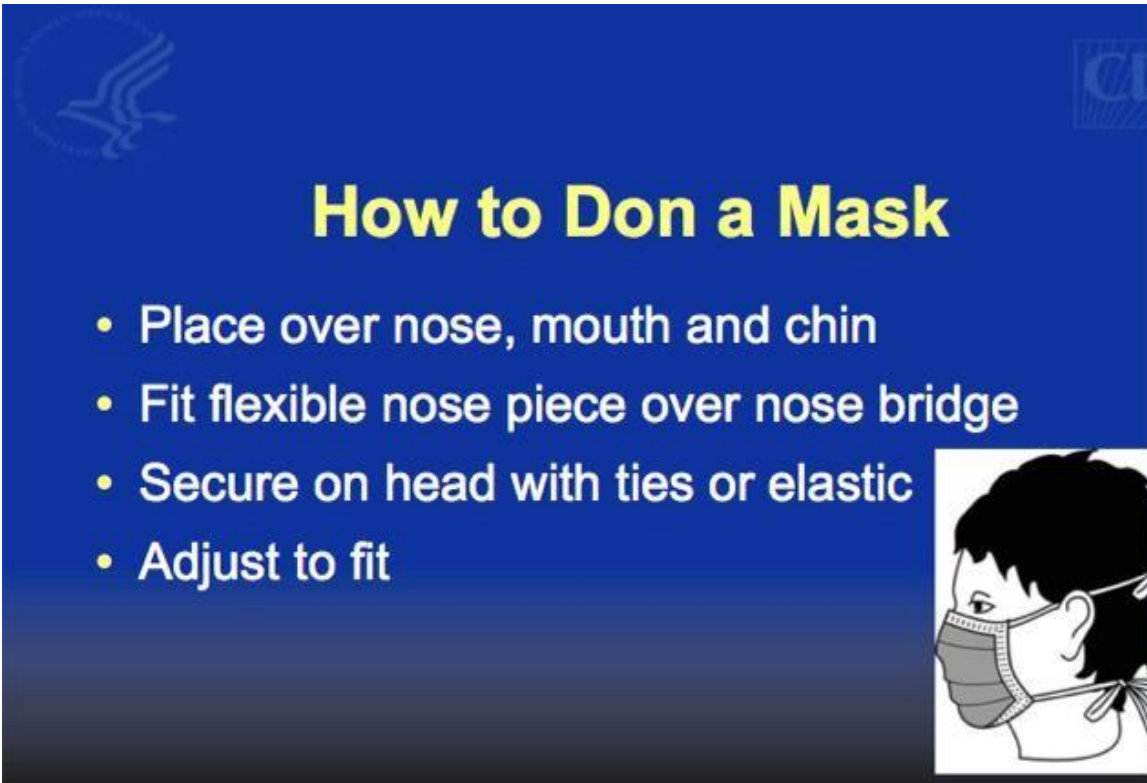
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Appendix C**



### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**



**How to Don a Mask**


- Place over nose, mouth and chin
- Fit flexible nose piece over nose bridge
- Secure on head with ties or elastic
- Adjust to fit



## How to Don a Particulate Respirator

- Select a fit tested respirator
- Place over nose, mouth and chin
- Fit flexible nose piece over nose bridge
- Secure on head with elastic
- Adjust to fit
- Perform a fit check –
  - Inhale – respirator should collapse
  - Exhale – check for leakage around face



**PPE Use in Healthcare Settings**

\*\*Volunteers will be fit tested for respirators on an as needed basis



 

## How to Don Gloves

- Don gloves last
- Select correct type and size
- Insert hands into gloves
- Extend gloves over isolation gown cuffs



PPE Use in Healthcare Settings

## How to Safely Use PPE

- Keep gloved hands away from face
- Avoid touching or adjusting other PPE
- Remove gloves if they become torn; perform hand hygiene before donning new gloves
- Limit surfaces and items touched

PPE Use in Healthcare Settings



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**Appendix D**

Receipt of Handbook

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

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Signature

Date

## Notes