

VOLUNTEER

Handbook

April 2017

Near Southwest

VIRGINIA

*medical
reserve
corps*



www.nspa1.org/nsmrc/

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Welcome

Dear Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer,

On behalf of the Near Southwest Region, I welcome you and thank you for joining as a Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Volunteer. We recognize that trained, organized, and motivated medical and non-medical volunteers are essential to meeting the public health needs of our community should a disaster or public health crisis arise.

This handbook was created to provide information and define guidelines for MRC volunteers. Please take time to read the information. Always feel free to contact me if you have questions or to pass along suggestions or comments regarding the MRC.

Our central office is located in Roanoke. As a Near Southwest MRC Volunteer you'll be able to volunteer across the region in areas such as Lynchburg, Roanoke, Martinsville, and the New River Valley. We're structured as a regional unit. Most MRC units in the State are administered within a single health district. As a regional unit we're able to respond with a greater number of volunteers and provide you with many different opportunities to volunteer.

Once again, welcome and thank you for your interest in becoming an MRC volunteer. I look forward to meeting and working with you as we serve our community.

Sincerely,



Near Southwest Medical Reserve Corps

NSMRC Coordinator

Acknowledgements

Information within this Volunteer Handbook has been adapted from the many active Medical Reserve Corps units around the country, including the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)

Mission

The mission of the MRC is to engage volunteers to strengthen public health, emergency response and community resiliency.

Overview

MRC units are community-based and function as a way to locally organize and utilize volunteers who want to donate their time and expertise to prepare for and respond to emergencies and promote healthy living throughout the year. MRC volunteers supplement existing emergency and public health resources.

MRC volunteers include medical and public health professionals such as physicians, nurses, pharmacists, dentists, veterinarians, paramedics, and epidemiologists. Many community members- interpreters, chaplains, office workers, legal advisors, and others- fill key support positions.

MRC volunteers can choose to support communities in need nationwide by providing improved community emergency preparedness by becoming prepared and educating others, and assisting with public events.

Training

- Ensure all personal information is up to date in the Virginia Volunteer Health System (www.vamrc.org/vvhs), including at least **two** methods for personal communication
- Completed Virginia State Police background investigation, as per Volunteer Orientation
- NSMRC Volunteer Handbook (if applicable)
- Completed courses related to introductory NSMRC Volunteer Orientation:
 - CPR, First Aid, AED
 - IS-100: Introduction to Incident Command System (ICS), VA TRAIN Course ID # 1024627
 - IS-700: National Incident Management System (NIMS), and Introduction, VA TRAIN Course ID # 1016070
 - Core Disaster Life Support, VA TRAIN Course ID #1058742
 - Psychological First Aid, VA TRAIN Course ID #1022214
- NSMRC Confidentiality Agreement
- NSMRC Affirmation of Service
- Existing or Open Facebook account to be used with Near Southwest MRC – CLOSED group

Communication

Routine Communications

In non-emergency situations, the Near Southwest MRC will communicate with volunteers through normal lines of communication such as phone and email.

Alerts will be sent through the Virginia Volunteer Health System and may include a text, phone call, and/or email. When you receive an alert please follow the instructions and click the link in the email to respond appropriately.

All NSMRC volunteers are responsible for providing contact information through VVHS.

Newsletter

The NSMRC will provide its members with a monthly newsletter. This newsletter will provide updates, news, training bulletins, meeting, and exercise schedules. Volunteers can make a request to the NSMRC Coordinator for having the newsletters sent via regular mail.

Emergency Communications

For communications in emergencies, unless the routine communications channels are down or compromised these channels shall be used to contact volunteers. During the exceedingly rare circumstance that phone and internet are inoperable, the NSMRC will contact volunteers through broadcast radio and TV communication similar to school closings.

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.
- 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.

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 members 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 members 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.

Near Southwest Medical Reserve Corps Confidentiality Agreement

I understand that as a volunteer with the Near Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps, **ALL** volunteer, staff, and patient information is confidential.

Therefore,

- I will not access, review, disclose or use confidential volunteer, staff, or patient information without specific authorization from the Near Southwest Medical Reserve Corps Unit Coordinator.
- I also understand that even when I am no longer a volunteer with the Near Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps, any confidential information I have learned must continue to be kept confidential.
- I understand that any breach of these confidentiality requirements will result in my immediate termination as a volunteer and may result in legal action against me.
- I understand that I must comply with all Near Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps policies, as well as all directions from the Near Southwest Medical Reserve Corps Unit Coordinator while serving as a volunteer.
- I further understand that my authorization to serve as a volunteer may be terminated at the discretion of the Near Southwest Medical Reserve Corps Unit Coordinator at any time if he or she determines it is in the best interests of the volunteer or unit.

I have read, understand, and agree to the information presented above:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Social Media Policy of the Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps

General Requirements for posting on behalf of the Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps on any Social Media outlet:

- Be responsible and professional in the activity. Volunteers should conduct themselves in a manner that is a positive reflection of the Medical Reserve Corps and supports the mission of the organization
- Maintain security of passwords and administrative rights to social media outlets
- If in doubt about a posting or a piece of information, check with an appropriate Medical Reserve Corps administrator or VDH Supervisor
- Be respectful of all other Medical Reserve Corps volunteers, supporters, Unit Coordinators and Virginia Department of Health staff
- Make sure all information is accurate prior to posting on a social media site or other electronic media sites. If it is discovered that information is inaccurate after posting, the volunteer user should work with the Unit Coordinator to quickly correct any errors.
- Electronic records and social media postings on behalf of the Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps, may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), and therefore, available for public distribution.
- Social Media platforms will not be used for fundraising purposes
- If sharing information retrieved from another website, social media outlet or agency, make sure that credit is given to appropriate provider
- If you wouldn't want your mother to read it, you probably shouldn't post it.

Posts by approved Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps employees, administrators and/or volunteers may be removed and administrative rights may be terminated when content of the post is:

- Off-subject or out-of-context
- Contains obscenity or material of a sexually explicit nature
- Contains personal identifying information, sensitive personal information or violates HIPPA requirements
- Contains offensive terms that target protected classes
- Is threatening, harassing or discriminatory
- Incites or promotes violence or illegal activities
- Contains information that reasonably could compromise public safety
- Advertises or promotes a commercial product or service, or any entity or individual
- Promotes or endorses a political campaign or candidates
- Posting information by using another's identity

- Posting photos, videos or audio recordings taken in the work environment without written consent from the employees or volunteers
- Using MRC or VDH logos without express consent

Additionally, if negative comments are received in any venue, discuss with the Unit Coordinator whether it is a constructive comment. If it is constructive, work with the Unit Coordinator to engage the person who left the comment and come to a positive resolution. If you don't have the right answers, try to find them together. If the comment is not constructive and does not align with the goals and missions of the Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps, request approval from the Unit Coordinator to remove the information from public view.

If incorrect information or out-dated information is posted in a social media venue, provide corrected or current information as soon as possible, noting the reason for the deletion of the previous information and justification for the update.

All published social media contact on behalf of the Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps is subject to monitoring. This contact may take the form of Facebook, Twitter, Picasa or any future developed social media platforms.

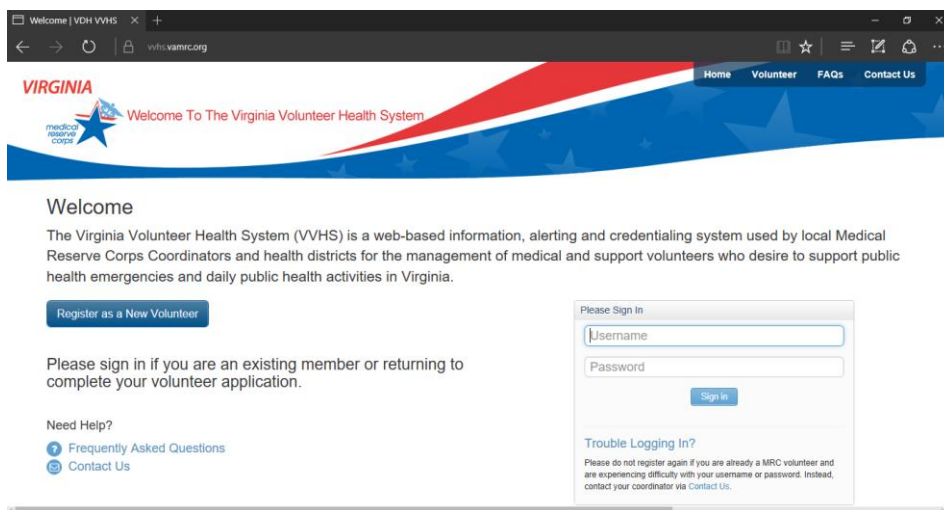
Social Media Team Members found in violation of this policy, may be subject to termination as an approved member of the Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps.

All Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps members/volunteers who receive permission to assist on the Social Media team will be required to adhere to these standards and to sign at the bottom of this document of their receipt and understanding of the Social Media Policy.

Adapted from: Social Media Handbook for Local Red Cross Units
State of Mississippi Social Media Policy
VA DHRM Policy: 1.75 Use of Electronic Communications and Social Media

Virginia Volunteer Health System

The Virginia Volunteer Health System (VVHS) is the primary communication tool for alerting NSMRC volunteers to readiness alerts, activation alerts, and community support events. Therefore, it is essential that all volunteers keep their VVHS accounts current at www.vvhs.vamrc.org.



To Register

Visit www.vvhs.nsmrc.org to register as a Near Southwest Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer. Registration includes creating a VVHS account and will take about 30 minutes to complete. The form may be saved for 14 days if you need to stop, save, and return to complete it. After saving and/or submitting registration, you will be prompted to “Sign In” upon returning to VVHS.

Items required for registration include:

- Basic and emergency contact information
- Driver’s license information
- HIPAA Liability Signed & Dated (HIPAA and MRC Volunteer Liability Act)
- Photo (optional but must be appropriate for ID: forward, no obscurities, etc.)
- Life Support Certifications (if applicable)

- Healthcare professions license(s) (VERY important, if applicable)

Tips for completing registration:

- Select “Roanoke Medical Reserve Corps”
- Remember that our region consists of these health districts: Roanoke/Alleghany, New River, Central Virginia, West Piedmont, and Pittsylvania-Danville. After identifying your own health district, you may be asked which districts you would like to serve and at that time would select any additional districts from the region, if desired.
- Current job status is looking for your primary healthcare (if applicable) position. Note – “student” is appropriate for high school and college students without current professional **employment**.

Commented [C1]: STOP HERE – ask Adam if can create a mock registration so I can use photos for familiarity with current questions asked, etc.

Click on “Register as a New Volunteer” to begin, and remember to **SAVE OFTEN** while completing the form.

All NSMRC volunteers should respond to quarterly alerts titled, **“Exercise: VVHS Alert Drill - YOUR Response is Required”** to assure communication methods are functional and the volunteer is responsive. Failure to consistently report may result in dismissal from the NSMRC by the Unit Coordinator.

Updating VVHS

All NSMRC volunteers are expected to actively maintain their VVHS accounts. This simply means that changes in address, contact information, licensure, certification, etc. will be updated by the volunteer **within 30 days** of said change.

TRAIN VA

TRAIN is an online resource to complete training and sign up for classes. You can access TRAIN through your VVHS account by clicking on the training tab. From there you can search and register for courses. The best way to search is by searching the Course ID which will bring you directly to the course registration page.

Your certificate of completion will populate after completing the evaluation for the course. Once the evaluation is finished than you’ve completed the course.