



PHILADELPHIA MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS (MRC) VOLUNTEER MANUAL

Publication Year: 2024

This manual provides a standardized resource for all Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers. The Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator reserves the right to update this manual as needed to accommodate changes made in policies or procedures. Please forward any questions regarding the content to the Philadelphia MRC Coordinator at mrc@phila.gov.

Philadelphia MRC

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ABOUT THE PHILADELPHIA MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS

Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)

- The MRC is a nationwide organization for clinical and non-clinical volunteers who donate their time during disasters and emergencies to help their communities. The MRC was created in response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. The national Medical Reserve Corps program provides the structure to pre-identify, train, credential, and deploy clinical and non-clinical volunteers in response to public health emergencies.
- The MRC is a national network of more than 300,000 volunteers in over 800 community-based units across the country. Every MRC unit reports to the Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR), which promotes volunteerism and service throughout the country. MRC units are represented in all 50 states and each unit has the ability to organize locally and deploy volunteers to help improve the safety and health of their communities.
- Recruiting and training a volunteer workforce is a key component of the emergency preparedness cycle.



PHILLY MRC ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



PHILADELPHIA MRC OVERVIEW

The Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps is a committed group of volunteers, with and without clinical backgrounds, who are trained to respond to public health emergencies, including natural disasters, bioterrorism, and disease outbreaks.

History & Major Events

The Philadelphia MRC was established in 2005 and is coordinated by the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Bioterrorism and Public Health Preparedness Program. Philadelphia MRC volunteers report to the Philadelphia MRC Coordinator.

- The MRC plays a critical role in ensuring that the City’s response to emergencies is prompt and effective.
- MRC volunteers may:
 - Distribute oral medication or vaccine during a public health emergency.
 - Assist with mass displacement and/or sheltering operations.
 - Support Philadelphia Fire Department (PFD) Emergency Medical Services (EMS) at citywide special events.
 - Support community engagement efforts within the City of Philadelphia.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps is to establish a cadre of trained medical, behavioral health, public health, and other volunteers to supplement existing public health and community medical resources.

Goals & Objectives

The primary goal of the Philadelphia MRC is to recruit and maintain a cadre of volunteers with and without clinical backgrounds who are trained and available to respond in a public health emergency. These volunteers, based on their scope of practice, will be able to:

- Respond to emergencies in an effective, organized framework within a clear command structure.
- Increase capacity of the existing public health and health care system to respond to emergencies by providing patient assessment and care, dispensing medication, and administering vaccinations.
- Provide support for special events within the City.

- Provide health education.
- Conduct community canvassing.

Benefits to Being a Volunteer

- Gain personal preparedness skills and resources.
- Learn and practice hands-on skills.
- Network with fellow volunteers.
- Make a difference in the community.
- Earn free continuing education credits at volunteer trainings.
- Be a valued member of our volunteer family.

Policies

Volunteers should review this manual, and the policies included in the appendices.

HOW TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER

Create a SERVPA Account

We try to make membership as convenient as possible so that many people participate. The Philadelphia MRC uses a system called SERVPA (<https://serv.pa.gov>) to manage our volunteers. When registering on SERVPA, please complete as much of the volunteer profile as possible. SERVPA allows us to contact volunteers quickly via text message, email, or phone call. Volunteers can choose a preferred method of contact. ([See Appendix E](#) for a how-to guide for using SERVPA.)

Requirements

To enroll in the Philadelphia MRC and maintain an active status, volunteers need to:

- Provide and maintain updated contact information in SERVPA.

- Undergo a criminal record check, which is automated through SERVPA.
- Participate in a new volunteer orientation training.

Volunteers do not need a clinical license to volunteer; however, to serve as a medical volunteer, they will need to maintain an active clinical license. All clinical licenses are verified through SERVPA.

Eligibility Criteria

All Philadelphia MRC volunteers must:

- Be 18 years of age or older.
- Reside in or near Philadelphia; temporary residents (e.g., students) are included.
- Register in the Philadelphia MRC Unit through SERVPA.
- Watch the New Volunteer Orientation Video.
- Pass a criminal record check.

Types of Volunteers

Non-Medical Volunteers

Anyone can be a non-medical MRC volunteer! Non-medical volunteers do not need an active clinical license. If volunteers hold an inactive or out-of-state license/credential, we still encourage them to enter their license/credential number in their SERVPA 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 volunteers are required to hold an active clinical license or certification to practice in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and, when volunteering, operate strictly within their legally defined scope of practice.

MRC VOLUNTEER STANDARDS & CONDUCT: VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS

Application Review

New applications are reviewed on a weekly basis by the MRC Coordinator. Once their application has been approved, volunteers will receive an automatic notification from SERVPA of the status.

- SERVPA will run verification checks on licensures and certifications. If there is a concern related to license validity or disciplinary action, the applicant will be asked for an explanation. In this event, final decision of applicant acceptance or denial is made by the Philadelphia Department of Public Health. If an applicant wishes to appeal the membership decision, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health reserves the right to make a final decision. The Philadelphia MRC reserves the right to conduct criminal background and child abuse checks for volunteers. Failure to disclose a misdemeanor or felony is considered a fraudulent application. A fraudulent application will be automatically denied with no option to appeal the decision.
- The Philadelphia MRC may, under exigent circumstances, request assistance from the Philadelphia Police Department to run rapid background checks to allow the MRC to bring new volunteers into a response as quickly as possible. If volunteers are denied due to the background check, the Philadelphia MRC will not receive the reason, only that the volunteer was not cleared.

Licensure and Credentialing

In the event the Philadelphia MRC is activated, members will be utilized in accordance with their training and skills. Members with expired, retired, or inactive licenses may be prohibited from performing some tasks (e.g., vaccinating) but their expertise and training will be utilized in other areas (education, administrative tasks). Exceptions may occur based on waivers that are issued during specific disaster declarations.

- Clinical license outside of Pennsylvania
 - Any volunteer who has a clinical license from a state other than Pennsylvania will be considered a non-medical volunteer.

Volunteer Conduct

The Philadelphia MRC expects that volunteers will comply with the following standards of behavior. The complete Philadelphia MRC Code of Conduct is included in [Appendix B](#) of this manual.

Volunteer Expectations

Volunteers are expected to:

- Exhibit professional behavior and adhere to the volunteer code of conduct.
- Carry a current form of identification (i.e., driver's license) while deployed.
- Adhere to applicable safety standards, as well as all local, state, and federal laws at all time.
- Maintain a professional appearance while participating in any MRC-related activity.
- Adhere to chain of command, both within the Philadelphia MRC and within any Incident Command System structure established during an emergency.
- Maintain updated contact and licensing information in SERVPA.
- Act within the scope of licensure/certification or training.

Code of Conduct

- Philadelphia MRC members will be held to the highest standards of their profession.
- Members will act within the scope of their licensure/certification or training.
- Members will maintain readiness by completing mandatory training and participating in voluntary activities.
- Members will treat others with respect and dignity in all situations.
- Philadelphia MRC members will not disclose, discuss, or use in any public area any confidential information available as a result of volunteer affiliation to any such person not authorized to receive such information in compliance with HIPAA.
- Members will have a personal and/or family emergency preparedness plan in place.
- Members will not self-deploy to responses and deployments they were not assigned by the MRC Coordinator or another authorized PDPH staff member.

Scope of Volunteer Activity

When a volunteer is deployed by the Philadelphia MRC, a deployment summary will be provided that will include a position description and defined scope of practice. Volunteers must act within these defined guidelines during the entirety of the deployment. If a volunteer acts outside of the defined scope of the assigned role, that volunteer may be held liable for problems that occur as a result. **It is very important that volunteers be familiar with their position description and that they perform strictly within the scope of their assigned role.** If at any time they do not feel qualified or comfortable in performing the position they have been assigned, they need to immediately contact the MRC Coordinator or the designated point of contact.

MRC volunteers may be called to respond to different types of events, including the following:

- Mass prophylaxis: This includes oral medication and vaccination responses.
- Mass care: This includes mass displacement events and emergency evacuation shelters.
- Special events: This includes citywide special events, such as concerts and races.

Roles and responsibilities depend on the volunteer's clinical licensure, skills, and interest. Responsibilities for medical volunteers may include the following:

- Vaccination
- Dispensing oral medications
- Interviews for patient history
- Assessment, triage, and referrals
- Specimen collection
- Assisting persons to obtain prescription medications
- First aid

Responsibilities for non-medical volunteers may include the following:

- Data collection (patient intake, collecting vaccine administration information)
- Line staff and crowd control
- Translating and interpreting, as appropriate
- Behavioral health, if certified or trained
- Administrative tasks
- Logistical tasks

MRC REPORTING STRUCTURE: ADMINISTRATIVE AND FIELD RESPONSE

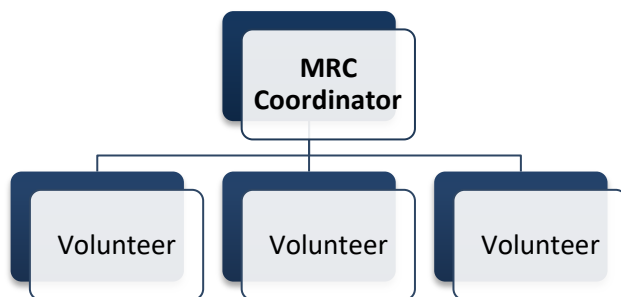
Administrative Structure

Prior to emergencies, the MRC Coordinator will communicate with all volunteers via SERVPA and/or through the MRC email (mrc@phila.gov). These communications will include detailed information about volunteer opportunities, deployment details, communication drills, and other important information.

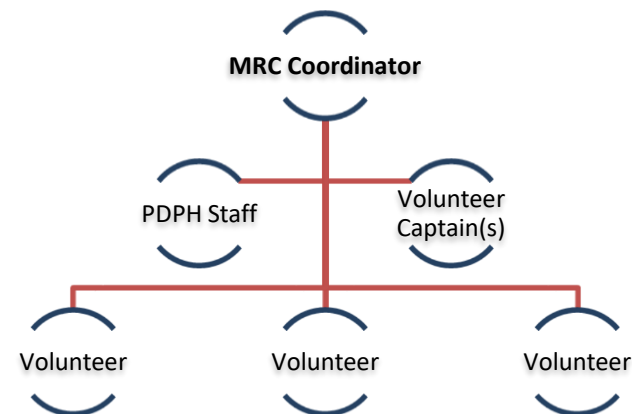
Field Response Structure

Once in the field, MRC volunteers will adhere to the field response organizational chart. During a deployment or active response, all volunteers will report directly to the MRC Coordinator but may also receive direction from an appointed PDPH staff member while at a field response site. At designated large-scale special events (i.e., Made in America Music Festival), experienced and skilled volunteers may be appointed by the MRC Coordinator to be a “Volunteer Captain.” These volunteers will receive a separate Just-In-Time Training (JITT) and will assist the MRC Coordinator with volunteer supervision for the duration of the event.

Administrative Structure



Field Response Structure



Confidentiality

Philadelphia MRC volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they may have access while serving as a volunteer. Confidentiality is particularly important with regard to protected health information.

- Do not take photos of patient forms.
- Do not take patient forms home with you.
- Event specific pictures may be shared in an official capacity but should never feature patients or clients.

Representation of the Philadelphia MRC

- Philadelphia MRC volunteers should never contact or communicate with organizations or individuals on behalf of the Philadelphia MRC or the Philadelphia Department of Public Health 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 interests.
- Media/News Releases
 - While deployed or working in service for the Philadelphia MRC, any inquiries from press regarding deployment should be directed to the Philadelphia Department of Public Health's Director of Communications, Incident Commander, or immediate supervisor on site. All press inquiries regarding the MRC should be reviewed with the MRC Coordinator and Director of Communications.

Health & Safety While Volunteering

The safety of volunteers is paramount. Every effort will be made to avoid deploying MRC volunteers to situations where they might sustain injury or infection. Depending on the scenario, volunteers may be asked to verify their immunization status. In situations when volunteers may experience a hazardous exposure, all MRC volunteers will be provided with the highest level of protection that is appropriate and available. This includes, when appropriate, personal protective equipment (such as N95 respirators or non-latex gloves), vaccines, and/or prophylaxis with oral countermeasures, such as antibiotics. After being activated, all responding volunteers will receive the appropriate personal protective equipment and training on how to use it before beginning their shift.

Attire

Philadelphia MRC volunteers typically wear blue MRC vests and/or their branded MRC T-shirts whenever serving in a volunteer capacity. Vests will be provided to volunteers at the deployment. Volunteers are required to wear closed-toe shoes or other appropriately functional footwear when volunteering. This dress code policy is provided for volunteers to present themselves in a positive and professional manner consistent with our values. It is expected that all volunteers follow this policy and be accountable for their appearance. Specific information related to attire is communicated in deployment summaries prior to volunteering.

Compensation

The Philadelphia MRC is a volunteer organization. If the Philadelphia MRC is activated, volunteers will support the emergency response without any compensation.

Disciplinary Procedures

Volunteer service is at the sole discretion of the Philadelphia MRC and the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH). Volunteers agree that MRC membership is at will and may be revoked at the discretion of PDPH. A volunteer may be dismissed from the Philadelphia MRC for the following reasons:

- Violation of patient confidentiality
- Violation of the Code of Conduct
- Criminal activity
- Non-adherence to Philadelphia MRC policies and protocols described in this manual

No Show Policy

Volunteers who register for a deployment, emergency response, or training and do not show up without contacting the MRC Coordinator or designee to inform them will be considered “No Shows.” Accountability is very important, and “No Shows” can result in responses being short-staffed or in empty seats at a training. For “No Shows,” two written warnings will be issued via email, and upon the third infraction, volunteers

will be notified in writing of their removal from the unit. Volunteers with special circumstances (medical emergency, etc.) should contact the MRC Coordinator at their earliest convenience.

Self-Deploying

At no time should volunteers 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. Volunteers who self-deploy will be asked to leave the deployment.

Leaving the MRC

A Philadelphia MRC volunteer can at any time decide to discontinue his/her membership with the organization. Written notice should be provided to the MRC Coordinator via email at mrc@phila.gov. Upon receipt of notification, the MRC Coordinator will confirm and change the volunteer's status to "closed" in SERVPA.

Volunteer Dismissal

Philadelphia MRC volunteers agree that membership is at will and may be terminated for inappropriate performance, willful neglect, or conduct that negatively reflects on the mission and services of the Philadelphia MRC, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, or the City of Philadelphia. The Philadelphia Department of Public Health reserves the right to make the final decision on volunteer dismissal.

Communications

➤ SERVPA

The Philadelphia MRC uses an Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals called SERPVA (<https://serv.pa.gov>) to manage volunteers. This system maintains the volunteer's profile, including contact information, clinical licensure, education, and deployment preferences, and allows the MRC to contact volunteers quickly via text message, email, or phone call.

➤ Email

- The Philadelphia MRC uses mrc@phila.gov to communicate with volunteers via email. Members of the MRC Team from PDPH may contact volunteers directly using this email address. *Please add mrc@phila.gov to your contacts to ensure emails are not sent to junk/spam folders.*

TRAINING

Core Competencies

Core competencies represent the baseline knowledge and skills that all MRC volunteers should have, regardless of their assigned role. These competencies represent a minimum standard that the Philadelphia MRC builds upon to train volunteers. The competencies also provide a “common language” between MRC units that enables units to communicate their capacities to one another clearly and efficiently. Philadelphia MRC volunteers, should be able to:

- Describe the procedures and steps necessary to protect their health, safety, and overall well-being and that of their family, the team, and the community.
- Document that they have an existing personal and family preparedness plan.
- Describe the chain of command (e.g., Incident Command System [ICS] structure), how it applies to a given incident, and how the MRC is integrated into the chain of command.
- Describe the MRC's role in a public health emergency response and how this role applies to a given incident.



SOCIAL MEDIA

The MRC uses social media to advertise orientations, trainings, and successful deployments. Currently, there are two social media platforms that are used by the MRC. These platforms can be utilized for recruitment efforts and to convey emergency preparedness information. Please follow us:

- LinkedIn: [Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps](#)
- Twitter: [PHLHthPrepare](#)

- Describe their role and the MRC process for communicating with response partners, media, the public, and others.
- Describe the impact of an event on their mental health and that of responders, the public, and others.
- Demonstrate their ability to follow procedures for assignment, activation, reporting, and deactivation.
- Identify the limits to their own skills, knowledge, and abilities as these pertain to their assigned MRC role.

Training Opportunities

All Philadelphia MRC volunteers must attend one Philadelphia MRC New Volunteer Orientation Seminar. Notifications about New Volunteer Orientation Seminars are issued to volunteers via SERVPA.

- Continuing Education Credits (CEUs)
 - The Philadelphia MRC may offer CEUs for certain licenses at no cost to the volunteer. A timeline and the required paperwork will be explained at any training where CEUs are offered. If volunteers have questions regarding continuing education credits, they should email mrc@phila.gov.
- Recorded trainings
 - Volunteers can watch previous virtual trainings, including Core Modules on Orientation, Mass Medication, Mass Care, and Special Events Deployments at the [Philadelphia MRC YouTube](#) page.

Other training opportunities are offered on a continuous basis in both virtual and in-person formats. Trainings are designed to provide volunteers with the knowledge and skills they will need to successfully deploy to real responses.

Volunteers may also be invited to participate in emergency response exercises.

SPECIALTY GROUPS

MRC specialty groups were created to prepare designated cadres of volunteers to respond to specific types of emergencies in Philadelphia. Volunteers who are involved in specialty groups are provided with specialized training to prepare them for their roles in specific types of responses.

Rapid Response Team

This is a subgroup of the Philadelphia MRC that consists of health professional volunteers (MD, PA, and RN) who are willing and able to be called upon to report to a no-notice event, such as an emergency evacuation shelter or other mass displacement event.

Expectations

- Volunteers will be requested to respond within 2-3 hours of the call.
- Calls may be made between 6am-midnight.
- Responding volunteers would stay for several hours until the next shift reports.

Tasks

- Conduct assessment, triage, and referrals.
- Assist people with medication needs.
- Canvass the population to identify any individuals with medical needs.
- Document patient interactions.
- Brief the incoming shift.

Community Outreach Team

This is a subgroup of the Philadelphia MRC that consists of clinical and non-clinical volunteers willing and able to be called upon to canvass neighborhoods in Philadelphia by foot and support community outreach initiatives, such as disease outbreaks, severe weather preparations, and other public health emergencies.

Expectations

- Volunteers should be able to walk between two to three hours per shift.
- Volunteers should feel comfortable approaching homes and businesses.
- Canvassing may take place during the day or on weekends.

Tasks

- Canvass neighborhoods by foot under the direction of outreach staff from PDPH.
- Support community events and information tables.
- Distribute public health materials to residents and businesses.

Radiation Response Volunteer Corps (RRVC)

The mission of the Philadelphia RRVC is to support the Health Department in response to radiological and nuclear emergencies in Philadelphia. This is a subgroup of the Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) consisting of health physicists, radiation safety techs, nuclear medicine techs, radiation oncology techs, radiation safety officers, medical physicists, people with experience with radioactive substances, and others with familiarity with radiation safety practices.

Expectations

- Volunteers should be familiar with the roles and expectations of the RRVC during a disaster, including understanding population monitoring.
- Volunteers will be offered trainings so that they may learn about radiation, radiation protection, detection, and decontamination.
- Volunteers should understand the steps to establish and operate a population monitoring center within the framework of the MRC.

Tasks

- Attend trainings and exercises that address radiological responses.
- Assist with screening people for radioactive contamination and/or exposure.
- Help manage individuals who have been contaminated or exposed.
- Provide information to people who present to a Community Reception Center for possible exposure to radiation.

ACTIVATION & DEPLOYMENT

Deployment Notifications

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.

Non-Emergency

The Philadelphia MRC may request volunteers to assist with routine Philadelphia Department of Public Health functions such as:

- Vaccination clinics
- City of Philadelphia special events (festivals and races)
- Community outreach

When volunteer opportunities arise, the MRC Coordinator will use SERVPA to notify volunteers via email. The notification will include a description of the volunteer request, the dates and times of the request, 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 SERVPA or a survey linked in an email message and follow any other instructions contained in the email to confirm participation.

Emergency

Philadelphia MRC volunteers must follow all rules and regulations for the deployment of volunteers during an emergency. **At no time are volunteers permitted to self-deploy without first being activated and dispatched by the MRC Coordinator.**

When PDPH leadership requests or authorizes MRC activation for an emergency, the MRC Coordinator will notify volunteers via SERVPA email, text, or phone call and provide the following information:

- Type of event and scope of the event or emergency
- Estimated numbers and types of volunteers needed
- Location(s) and time(s) to which volunteers are to report

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

Reporting for Duty

The Philadelphia MRC participates in a range of events and the unit may be activated for different types of public health emergencies. The locations to which volunteers may be asked to report could vary with each deployment. For example, volunteers may be asked to report directly to a specific work site or to report first to a volunteer reception center to check in and receive training on assignments before being deployed to the actual worksite.

- Whenever reporting for a deployment, remember to bring a government-issued form of identification (e.g., driver's license, state ID, or passport). Also, bring other items needed for comfort and convenience, such as water or a snack.

Liability Protection

Activated Philadelphia MRC volunteers fall under the liability and risk management codes of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the City of Philadelphia provided that volunteers act within the scope of their training and assignment. The collection of federal, state, and local laws that may apply to volunteers in the Philadelphia MRC can be found in [Appendix D](#).

Deployment Summary

A deployment summary provides instructions for volunteers to prepare for their assigned deployment. Prior to a deployment, volunteers receive a deployment summary that includes:

- Date
- Location
- Timeframe
- Event access (parking, public transportation)
- Command structure
- Scope of activities
- Attire
- Items to bring
- Day of point of contact
- MRC point of contact
- Training requirements

Demobilization

When demobilizing, Philadelphia MRC members should ensure the following actions are accomplished:

- Ensure all assigned activities are completed.
- Clean up any debris or trash associated with the assignment.
- Notify the Philadelphia MRC Coordinator or appropriate supervisor when departing the site and sign out.

After demobilization, the Philadelphia MRC Coordinator will distribute an electronic survey or hold a discussion so volunteers can share their experiences and provide feedback. The Philadelphia MRC Coordinator may also share post-deployment resources, including mental health resources, as appropriate.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who can join the Philadelphia MRC?

All Philadelphia MRC volunteers must:

- Be 18 years of age or older.
- Reside in or near Philadelphia; temporary residents (e.g., students) are included.
- Register in the Philadelphia MRC Unit on SERVPA.
- Attend a New Volunteer Orientation Seminar.
- Pass a criminal background check.

How do I update my SERVPA profile?

- It is the responsibility of each MRC volunteer to keep their profile complete and up to date in SERVPA. If you require assistance with this system or lose your login information, please email mrc@phila.gov.

Do I have to live in Philadelphia to Volunteer?

- You do not have to live in the City of Philadelphia to volunteer with the Philadelphia MRC. Some volunteers choose to volunteer in Philadelphia even though they may live elsewhere.

Do I need a clinical license from Pennsylvania to practice medical volunteer roles?

- Yes, you need a clinical license in good standing in order to be assigned as a medical volunteer.

Do I have to be a practicing healthcare provider to volunteer?

- No. Philadelphia MRC is made up of both medical and non-medical volunteers. Volunteers come from all walks of life and professional backgrounds.

Am I obligated to volunteer in an emergency?

- No. Responding with the Philadelphia MRC is voluntary. We thank all volunteers who are able to give their time.

How will you contact me in an emergency?

- During an emergency, the Philadelphia MRC will use SERVPA to send out a message to recruit volunteers. Volunteers respond as directed, by following instructions provided in the email or by completing a survey. If there is an internet outage, the Philadelphia MRC may call volunteers or make a radio announcement.

Will you ask me to volunteer for an emergency outside of Philadelphia or outside of Pennsylvania?

- Volunteers can register to be deployed outside of Philadelphia. Members are asked to indicate on the application which Southeastern Pennsylvania counties they are willing to serve. Space is also available to indicate willingness to be deployed to areas outside of Southeastern Pennsylvania.
- Typically, the Philadelphia MRC will not be deployed away from the Philadelphia region, unless requested as a mutual aid resource. Any request for volunteers will come from the Philadelphia MRC. Volunteers who choose to be deployed outside of the area must meet established criteria for statewide or out-of-state deployment. Final approvals are the responsibility of the requesting agency or organization.

Who will have access to my personal information?

- The Philadelphia MRC ensures your personal information is kept confidential.

If I moved or am too busy to volunteer, how do I leave the unit?

- A Philadelphia MRC volunteer can at any time decide to discontinue his/her membership with the organization. You can provide written notice to the Philadelphia MRC Coordinator via email at mrc@phila.gov. Upon receipt, the Philadelphia MRC Coordinator will confirm and change the volunteer's status to "closed" in SERVPA.

If I have questions or concerns, who do I contact?

- Email mrc@phila.gov or call 215-685-4442.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Philadelphia MRC Volunteer General Release Waivers; given to volunteers in person at first deployment.

Last Name, First Name (print legibly)

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
Medical Reserve Corps.
Confidentiality Statement

I understand that during my deployment with the Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps., I may have access to people's personal health information. This information may be subject to different federal and state privacy regulations, including but not limited to, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act ("HIPAA"). I understand that my access to personal health information is limited to the purpose(s) of my deployment, and I agree that I will limit the use of personal health information only to those specific purposes. Any information gathered, generated, or processed during my deployment with the Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps. remains the sole property of the City of Philadelphia.

I understand that the confidentiality of all information that I receive or create during my deployment with the Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps. must be maintained even beyond my deployment. I understand that these confidentiality requirements exist regardless of how the information is received or created (i.e., verbal, paper, or electronic format). During my deployment with the Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps, these are some of the procedures that I agree to follow to keep people's information confidential:

- I agree to shred all documents containing personal health information prior to disposal.
- I agree that all discussions and telephone conversations requiring the use of confidential and/or identifying information will occur in my work area or another confidential work area. If I need to discuss a person's personal health information in a public area, I will keep my voice low and minimize the ability of others to hear the conversation.
- I agree that I will log off from my computer workstation if it is unattended, and I will not share my password information with any unauthorized person.
- I will not copy any patient records or any other record that contains confidential and/or identifying information to any portable electronic or portable storage device without the express consent of the appropriate supervisor or manager.
- I will not take any pictures or post any confidential and/or identifying information to any social media platform of any person receiving treatment or other services during my deployment with the Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps. This includes not taking any pictures where individuals receiving any services can be seen in the background.
- I will not transfer any records containing confidential or identifying data through non-secure methods such as personal email or text message.
- I will not discuss anything that I saw, read, or heard during my deployment with non-workforce members, both during my deployment and after my deployment has ended.

I understand that I am still obligated to comply with the terms of this confidentiality statement even after my deployment with the Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps. ends.

Signature of individual making pledge

Date

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
GENERAL RELEASE
VOLUNTEERS

I, _____, desire to volunteer my services to the City of Philadelphia ("City") and in consideration of the opportunity to serve the City as a volunteer and gain valuable experience and enrichment while doing so, agree as follows:

1. **Release.** I, for myself and my heirs, successors, and assigns, and all persons claiming through any of them ("Releasing Parties") do hereby release the City, its officials, departments, agencies, agents, representatives, boards, commissions, employees, successors and assigns ("Released Parties"), from any action, causes of action, suits, claims, liabilities, losses, costs and expenses (including reasonable attorneys fees and court costs), at law or in equity, which any of the Releasing Parties may have against the Released Parties for any loss, damage or injury to property or person, including death, relating to or arising from my participation in the provision of volunteer services to the City; provided however, that this release shall not apply to any action, causes of action, suits, claims, liabilities, losses, costs and expenses (including reasonable attorneys fees and court costs), at law or in equity, which arise solely from the gross negligence or willful misconduct of the Released Parties.
2. **Assumption of Risk.** I voluntarily assume all risks of loss, damage and all injuries (including personal injury, disability and death) that may be sustained while providing volunteer services to the City.
3. **Visual Image/Photo Authorization.** I authorize, without compensation, the use by the City of my image and/or voice recordings relating to my volunteer services to the City. This authorization includes permission to reproduce, publicize, broadcast or display my visual images or voice recordings, with or without my name, and without any form of compensation for the use of my images, name or voice recordings, throughout the world, an unlimited number of times in perpetuity in any and all media, now known or hereafter invented.
4. **Use of City Vehicles Prohibited.** I agree that I will not operate any City vehicle while providing volunteer services to the City.

BY SIGNING MY NAME BELOW, I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THIS RELEASE FROM LIABILITY.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, and intending to be legally bound, I have executed this Release as of the date stated below:

DATE: _____

VOLUNTEER:

WITNESS:

Print Name: _____, Volunteer

Print Name: _____, Witness

Appendix B: Violence-Free Environment Policy

- The Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps is committed to the safety of its volunteers and does not tolerate any acts or threats of violence by or against a volunteer or staff member. The Philadelphia MRC prohibits the possession of weapons by volunteers at any training, meeting, function, or deployment of the unit, regardless of whether a person is licensed to carry a weapon. This policy applies to all volunteers, clients, or visitors at Philadelphia MRC sponsored functions. The only exceptions to this policy are for police officers, security guards, or military personnel employed by state or federal government who are engaged in official duties. Failure to abide by this policy will result in volunteer termination.

Appendix C: Harassment-Free Environment Policy

- The Philadelphia MRC is committed to providing a harassment and discrimination free work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Staff and volunteers have the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment. It is the policy 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. Failure to abide by this policy will result in volunteer termination. It is the intent that all Philadelphia MRC volunteers will work in an environment free from discrimination and/or harassment by an employee, supervisor, or another volunteer for any reason.
- If you feel you may have been the subject of discrimination or harassment, you should contact the Philadelphia MRC Coordinator.

Appendix D: Liability Protections

Title and Access Link	Summary	Declaration needed?	Liability	Injury, death compensation	Indemnity, legal defense
Federal Volunteer Protection Act (VPA) of 1997 http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-105publ19/pdf/PLAW-105publ19.pdf	Protects volunteers who are volunteering for a governmental entity or nonprofit organization from liability. Overrides state law that is inconsistent with VPA unless state law provides more protection.	No emergency or disaster declaration is needed.	Protects volunteer if actions were within scope of practice, properly licensed by appropriate authorities, and harm was not caused by operation of a vehicle.	Not addressed by this Act.	Provides for a defense if the volunteer is being sued. Does not provide for payment of defense costs or judgment or settlement.

<p>Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act</p> <p>http://www.phe.gov/preparedness/legal/prepact/pages/default.aspx</p>	<p>Protection for qualified individuals engaged in activities related to use of covered pharmaceutical countermeasures.</p>	<p>PREP Act declaration is necessary for this to apply. PREP Act declaration is different from, and not dependent on, other emergency or disaster declarations. Declaration is issued by the Secretary of DHHS.</p>	<p>Provides tort liability for qualified persons engaged in activities related to covered pharmaceutical countermeasures “Qualified persons” and applicable activities are defined by the declaration.</p>	<p>Not addressed by this Act.</p>	<p>Not addressed in this Act. Thus, this provides for a defense if the volunteer is being sued but does not address payment of defense costs, judgments, or settlements.</p>
<p>Act 227: Counter Terrorism Planning, Preparedness, and Response (CPTPR) Act</p> <p>http://www.pema.pa.gov/about/legislativeandlegal/Pages/Acts-Bills-and-Titles.aspx#U773oiTD_IU</p>	<p>Applies other statutes to individuals responding as part of a response team and those that support those teams when deployed for a terrorist event or natural disaster.</p>	<p>Act applies during potential or actual manmade or natural disasters as well as during task force or team drill or training exercises</p>	<p>Applies statutes such as Medical good Samaritan civil immunity, Nonmedical good Samaritan civil immunity, and volunteer-in-public-service negligence standard to individuals in and supporting activated or deployed regional or Statewide response teams.</p>	<p>Indicates that nothing in the Act can be used to permit an insurer to raise workers’ compensation premiums due to participation or membership in an applicable team or task force.</p>	<p>Not addressed in this Act. Thus, this provides for a defense if the volunteer is being sued but does not address payment of defense costs, judgments, or settlements.</p>
<p>Title 35: Subchapter C: Intrastate Mutual Aid</p> <p>http://www.pema.pa.gov/about/legislativeandlegal/Pages/Acts-Bills-and-Titles.aspx#U773oiTD_IU</p>	<p>Provides a system for participating political subdivisions participating to address licensing, liability/immunity, workers’ compensation, and command and control of personnel being utilized for activities which are using this system. All Commonwealth political subdivisions participate unless a resolution was enacted to not participate. Indicates conditions of license, certificate, and permit portability from one subdivision to another.</p>	<p>Provides coverage for volunteers with or without an emergency or disaster declaration, provided the Intrastate Mutual Aid system is utilized.</p>	<p>All persons responding under an official request and action via this system are considered employees of the requesting political subdivision and thus are not liable for death of or injury to persons or for damage to property when acting according to the system. Does not cover spontaneous or self-deployed volunteers.</p>	<p>The responding political subdivision provides workers’ compensation insurance protection for employees and volunteers responding under an official request and action via this system. This includes benefits for injury or death.</p>	<p>Not specifically addressed in this Subchapter to indicate if liability coverage provided by the receiving political subdivision includes indemnity and payment of legal fees.</p>

<p>Title 35: Chapter 77: Miscellaneous Provisions</p> <p>http://www.pema.pa.gov/about/legislativeandlegal/Pages/Acts-Bills-and-Titles.aspx#.U773oiTD_IU</p> <p>AND</p> <p>http://www.pema.pa.gov/Documents/1/Directives/%28PEMA%20Directive%202003-01%29 Training%20and%20Test%20Authorization%20Requests.pdf</p>	<p>Provides liability protection for the Commonwealth, its political subdivisions and other agencies, their agents, employees, and representatives, among others, who are engaged in disaster services activities. Indicates criteria which must be met for such individuals to be eligible for workers' compensation.</p>	<p>Injury compensation requires several items outlined in the PEMA Directive linked here. The injury compensation requires either a presidential, gubernatorial, or local disaster declaration OR volunteers to be activated by PEMA directly OR the activation of volunteers by their EMA to respond to a local disaster. Can also be implemented for exercises and trainings by completing a form indicated (PEMA-TAR-1).</p>	<p>Protects any person or agent of the Commonwealth and its political subdivisions from liability for death of or any injury to persons or loss or damage to property or loss or damage to property as a result of emergency response activities while complying or attempting to comply with the Emergency Management Services Code (Title 35: Part V).</p>	<p>Duly enrolled emergency management volunteers who are not eligible to receive benefits under the Workmen's Compensation Laws are entitled to specific benefits (listed in the Chapter) related to injuries sustained while engaged in emergency management activities/services (except war or armed conflict), tests, drills, exercises, or operations authorized by PEMA.</p>	<p>Not addressed in this section of the chapter. Thus, this provides for a defense if the volunteer is being sued but does not address payment of defense costs, judgments, or settlements.</p>
<p>PEMA Directive D2006-01</p> <p>http://www.pema.pa.gov/Pages/Directives.aspx#.U7739CTD_IU</p>	<p>Describes the procedure for volunteers to meet the "duly enrolled" criteria: 1. Enrollment in SERVPA or 2. Enrollment with PEMA on an Official Enrollment List with corresponding duly enrolled identification.</p>	<p>Does not apply.</p>	<p>Does not apply.</p>	<p>Does not apply.</p>	<p>Does not apply.</p>
<p>Title 42: Chapter 83: Subchapter C: Section 8331: Medical good Samaritan civil immunity</p>	<p>Provides liability covered for indicated medical professionals who are at the scene of an emergency and are rendering emergency care at the scene of the emergency.</p>	<p>Does not address declarations.</p>	<p>Provides civil liability immunity for physician or other practitioner of the healing arts or any RN, licensed by any state, who happens upon by change, arrives on due to serving on an emergency call panel/committee of a county medical society or is called to the scene of an</p>	<p>Not addressed by this Act.</p>	<p>Not addressed in this Act. Thus, this provides for a defense if the volunteer is being sued but does not address payment of defense costs, judgments, or settlements.</p>

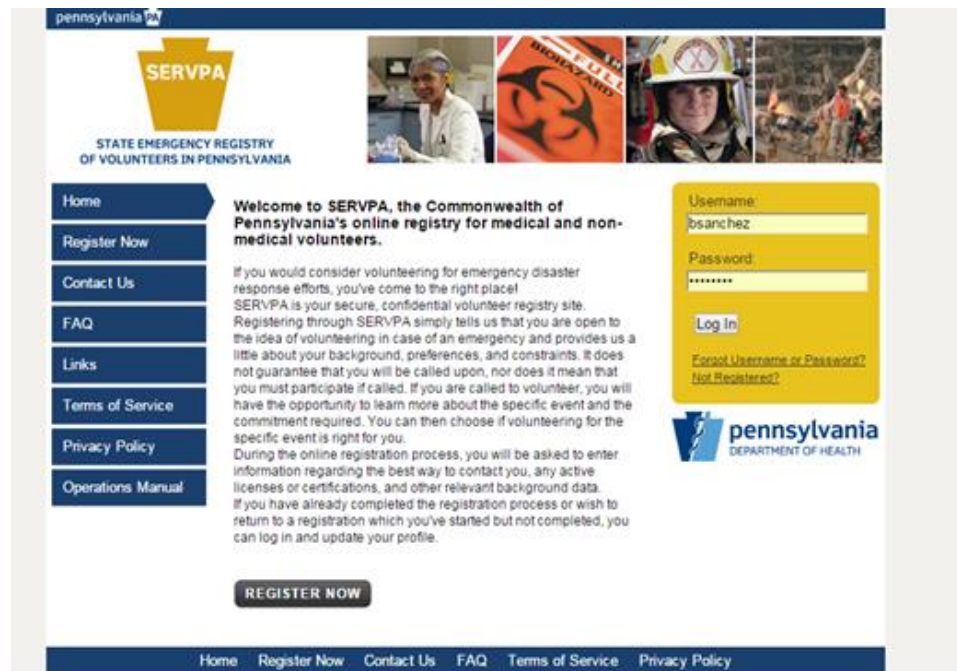
http://www.legis.state.pa.us/WU01/LI/LI/CT/HTML/42/42.HTM			<p>emergency by police or other duly constituted officers of a government unit or is present when the emergency occurs and provides good faith emergency care.</p>		
<p>Title 42: Chapter 83: Subchapter C: Section 8331.2: Good Samaritan civil immunity for use of automated external defibrillator</p> http://www.legis.state.pa.us/WU01/LI/LI/CT/HTML/42/42.HTM	<p>Provides civil immunity for any individual who is trained to uses an AED and uses an AED which results in harm to the individual receiving the AED treatment.</p>	<p>Does not address declarations.</p>	<p>Individual who is trained to use an AED and uses it in good faith in an emergency is not liable for civil damages due to its use which results in harm to the individual receiving AED treatment. Specifies what constitutes “training” in order for an individual to be trained to use an AED.</p>	<p>Not addressed by this Act.</p>	<p>Not addressed in this Act. Thus, this provides for a defense if the volunteer is being sued but does not address payment of defense costs, judgments, or settlements.</p>
<p>Title 42: Chapter 83: Subchapter C: Section 8332: Emergency response provider and bystander good Samaritan civil immunity</p> http://www.legis.state.pa.us/WU01/LI/LI/CT/HTML/42/42.HTM	<p>Provides civil immunity for any person who renders emergency care, first aid, on-scene rescue, or movement of a person receiving care.</p>	<p>Does not address declarations.</p>	<p>Provides immunity for civil liability to persons, including emergency personnel, whether or not trained to practice medicine, who in good faith renders emergency care, first aid, on-scene rescue, or movement of a person receiving care to another place of medical care. Does not provide liability to drivers of emergency response vehicles.</p>	<p>Not addressed by this Act.</p>	<p>Not addressed in this Act. Thus, this provides for a defense if the volunteer is being sued but does not address payment of defense costs, judgments, or settlements.</p>
<p>Title 42: Chapter 83: Subchapter C: Section 8332.4: Volunteer-in-public-services negligence standard</p>	<p>No volunteer, rendering public services for a non-profit organization or for the Commonwealth or local.</p>	<p>Does not address declarations.</p>	<p>Civil liability coverage provided to volunteers rendering public services for the specified agencies/organizations, unless the volunteer’s conduct falls substantially below the generally</p>	<p>Not addressed by this Act.</p>	<p>Not addressed in this Act. Thus, this provides for a defense if the volunteer is being sued but does not address payment of defense costs, judgments, or settlements.</p>

<p>http://www.legis.state.pa.us/WU01/LI/LI/CT/HTML/42/42.HTM</p>	<p>government agency shall be liable to any person for civil damages.</p>		<p>practiced standards for like circumstances and the person knew/had reason to know the act or omission created a substantial risk or actual harm to the other person or property.</p>		
<p>Title 42: Chapter 83: Subchapter C: Section 8334: Civil immunity in mass immunization projects</p> <p>http://www.legis.state.pa.us/WU01/LI/LI/CT/HTML/42/42.HTM</p>	<p>Provides liability coverage for specific medical professionals in mass immunization projects which are approved in writing by the Department of Health or designee.</p>	<p>Does not address emergency declarations.</p>	<p>Any physician who is not paid for services and any RN or LPN licensed in the Commonwealth who participate in a mass immunization project are not liable to any person for illness, reaction, or adverse effect arising from or out of the use of any drug or vaccine provided by the physician or nurse in such project.</p>	<p>Not addressed by this act.</p>	<p>Not addressed in this Act. Thus, this provides for a defense if the volunteer is being sued but does not address payment of defense costs, judgments, or settlements.</p>
<p>Title 42: Chapter 85: Matters Affecting Government Units (Political Subdivision Tort Claims Act)</p> <p>http://www.legis.state.pa.us/WU01/LI/LI/CT/HTML/42/42.HTM</p>	<p>No local government agency is liable for any damages on account of any injury to person or property, with exceptions noted. Volunteer organizations created and operating under authorization of a local government agency are included in this coverage as employees of such agency.</p>	<p>No emergency or disaster declaration required.</p>	<p>Employees of a local government agency are not liable for any damages on account of any injury to a person or property caused by any act of the local agency or an employee, subject to limitations.</p>	<p>Not addressed by this act.</p>	<p>Provided the employee provides the agency with proper notice of the suit and cooperates in the defense of the action, the employee is indemnified by the local agency and is thus not responsible for payment of any judgment of the suit, surcharges, contributions, indemnity, or reimbursement for any liability incurred for damages, or legal fees.</p>
<p>Insurance</p>	<p>Some political subdivisions, local government agencies, or other organizations purchase private insurance to cover events such as accident, injury, or death of</p>	<p>No emergency or disaster declaration required.</p>	<p>Does not apply.</p>	<p>Varies based on policy purchased, if one is purchased at all.</p>	<p>Does not apply.</p>

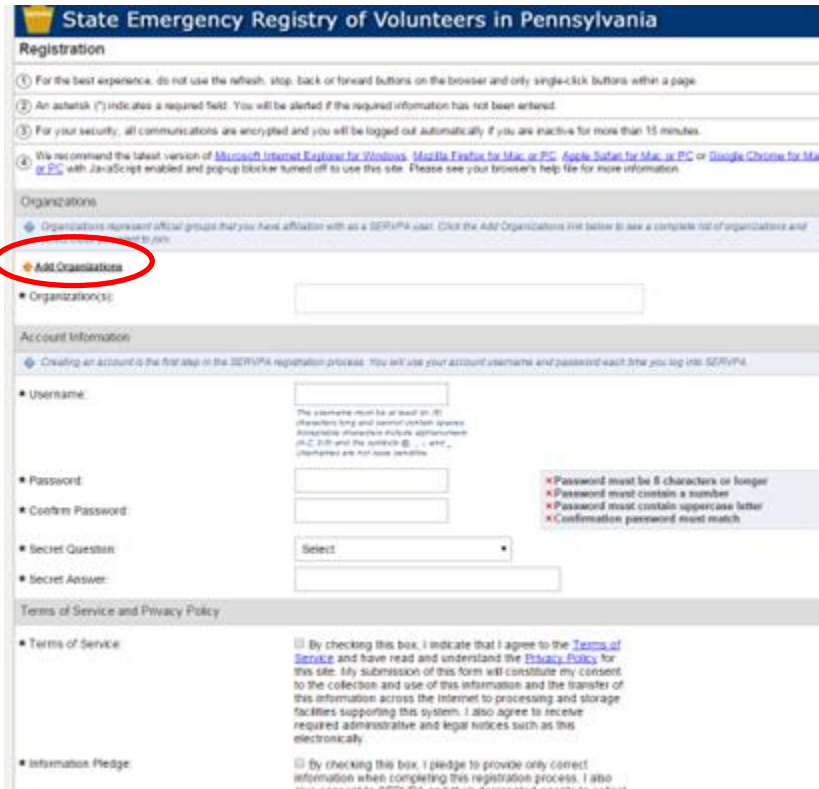
	volunteers associated with the subdivision, agency, or organization.				
<p>Title 35: Part V: Chapter 76: Emergency management Assistance Compact</p> <p>http://www.pema.pa.gov/about/legislativeandlegal/Pages/Acts-Bills-and-Titles.aspx#.U773oiTD_IU</p>	<p>Provides a system for participating political subdivisions participating to address licensing, liability/immunity, workers' compensation, and command and control of personnel being utilized for activities which are using this system. All Commonwealth political subdivisions participate unless a resolution was enacted to not participate. Indicates conditions of license, certificate, and permit portability from one party state to another.</p>	<p>Applies when the affected state's Governor has declared an emergency. Also applies for emergency-related exercises, testing, or other training activities using equipment and personnel to simulate the mutual aid process between party states and subdivisions of such states.</p>	<p>All persons rendering aid via this system are considered agents of the requesting party state regarding tort liability and immunity. Thus, such individuals are not liable while so engaged or on account of the maintenance or use of any equipment or supplies in connection with such aid/response.</p>	<p>The responding party state provides workers' compensation protection for employees and volunteers responding under an official request and action via this system. This includes benefits for injury or death.</p>	<p>Not specifically addressed in this Subchapter to indicate if liability coverage provided by the receiving political subdivision includes indemnity and payment of legal fees.</p>

Appendix E: SERVPA: How to Guide

1. Go to serv.pa.gov
2. Click the [register now](#) (Blue Tab on the left side)



3. Click “Add Organization”



State Emergency Registry of Volunteers in Pennsylvania

Registration

1 For the best experience, do not use the refresh, stop, back or forward buttons on the browser and only single-click buttons within a page.

2 An asterisk (*) indicates a required field. You will be alerted if the required information has not been entered.

3 For your security, all communications are encrypted and you will be logged out automatically if you are inactive for more than 15 minutes.

4 We recommend the latest version of [Microsoft Internet Explorer for Windows](#), [Mozilla Firefox for Mac or PC](#), [Apple Safari for Mac or PC](#) or [Google Chrome for Mac or PC](#) with JavaScript enabled and pop-up blocker turned off to use this site. Please see your browser's help file for more information.

Organizations

Organizations represent official groups that you have affiliation with as a SERVPA user. Click the [Add Organizations](#) link below to see a complete list of organizations and to add new ones.

Add Organizations

Organizations:

Account Information

Creating an account is the first step in the SERVPA registration process. You will use your account username and password each time you log into SERVPA.

Username:
The username must be at least 8 (1) characters long and cannot contain spaces. Acceptable characters include alphanumeric (A-Z, 0-9) and the symbols @, ., and _ (Underscores are not case sensitive).

Password:
Confirm Password:

Secret Question:

Secret Answer:

Terms of Service and Privacy Policy

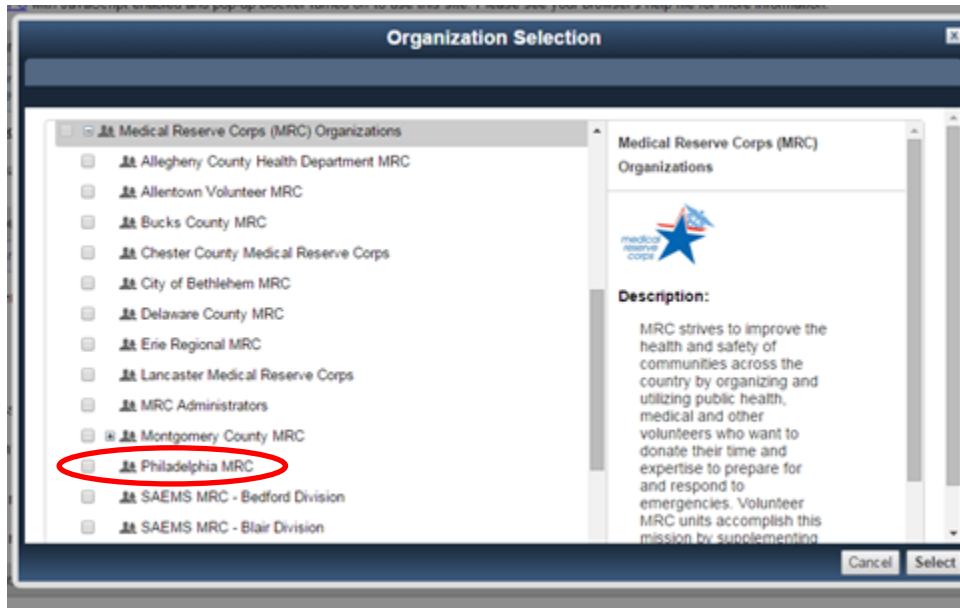
Terms of Service: By checking this box, I indicate that I agree to the [Terms of Service](#) and have read and understand the [Privacy Policy](#) for this site. My submission of this form will constitute my consent to the collection and use of this information and the transfer of this information across the Internet to processing and storage facilities supporting this system. I also agree to receive required administrative and legal notices such as this electronically.

Information Pledge: By checking this box, I pledge to provide only correct information when completing this registration process. I also agree to the [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#).

4. Find “Medical Reserve Corps.” Click on + to find “Philadelphia Medical Reserve Corps.”



5. Click on + to find “Philadelphia MRC.”
6. Check the box next to “Philadelphia MRC.”
7. Click Select



8. Fill out the application with your information.
 - a. First name (**as listed on your birth certificate and/or government ID**). Nicknames are not permitted.
 - b. Last name (**as listed on your birth certificate and/or government ID**). Nicknames are not permitted.
 - c. **Date of birth**
 - d. Two contact methods (**email and phone**)
 - i. At least one emergency contact should be listed
 - e. Professional Occupation
 - i. [SERVPA Profile Identity Requirements](#)
 - ii. [SERVPA How-To Guide](#)
9. Please note, without **completing** the registration process and providing the required information listed above, volunteers **will not** be deployed.

- 10.** Once new volunteers have completed all of the steps in the registration process, they will:
 - a. Watch the [Philadelphia MRC: New Volunteers Welcome](#) orientation video to ensure they are prepared for deployment
 - b. Review the Volunteer Manual
- 11.** Volunteers should email MRC@phila.gov with any questions or call 215-685-4442.

Appendix F: Resources

- Philadelphia MRC Home Page: <https://www.phila.gov/services/mental-physical-health/volunteer-for-the-philadelphia-medical-reserve-corps-pmrc/>
- Philadelphia MRC Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/PHLHealthPrepare>
- SERVPA: <https://serv.pa.gov/>
- National MRC Website: <https://mrc.hhs.gov/HomePage>
- FEMA Independent Study Courses: <https://training.fema.gov/>

Appendix G: Acronyms

ASPR—Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response

HHS—United States Department of Health and Human Services

MRC—Medical Reserve Corps

PDPH—Philadelphia Department of Public Health

SERVPA—State Emergency Registry of Volunteers in Pennsylvania

MRC VOLUNTEER PHOTO GALLERY





THANK YOU FOR YOUR VOLUNTEERISM

Philadelphia MRC

MRC@phila.gov