

Collin County Medical Reserve Corps

Volunteer Handbook

Welcome to the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)

Dear Collin County Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer,

On behalf of the Collin County Medical Reserve Corps, welcome and thank you for joining our team and making the Medical Reserve Corps part of your volunteer activities.

Our MRC is a community-based program designed to develop a well-trained team of medical and non-medical volunteers who are willing to contribute their skills and expertise to the community. Our efforts ensure that we all may be better equipped to prepare for and respond to a wide range of emergencies.

Volunteers can choose how they would like to contribute their time and talents to the program. You may choose to assist only during a public health emergency or you may volunteer throughout the year by assisting in various areas of need within the health department.

This handbook was created to give you important information about volunteering and will hopefully help make the most of your volunteer experience with the MRC Program. The handbook functions as a guide for MRC Volunteers.

For each volunteer opportunity you participate in, there will be more specific policies and procedures regarding your role. You will learn much of the information regarding your specific responsibilities "on-the-job."

Please take the time to read this handbook carefully. The handbook should serve as a reference to use when you have questions or concerns, but please feel free to contact us directly for additional information or comments. We value your suggestions, comments, and professionalism to improve the coordination and response of our members to emergencies and other public health issues.

Once again, thank you and welcome to the Medical Reserve Corps!

Sincerely,

Collin County MRC

Program Contact Information

Collin County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)
825 N. McDonald Street, Suite #130
McKinney, Texas 75069

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Preparedness Coordinator: Meredith Nurge
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Online Resources

Collin County Medical Reserve Corps
www.collincountytx.gov/mrc/

Texas Medical Reserve Corps
www.dshs.texas.gov/commprep/TexasMRC.aspx

National Medical Reserve Corps
www.aspr.hhs.gov/MRC/

History and Purpose

There was an outpouring of support for the emergency relief efforts after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Many Americans asked, “What can I do to help?” Medical and public health professionals were among those who wanted to volunteer their services. It was soon discovered that using medical-related volunteers in emergencies requires a careful and organized approach. Although they may have had the necessary medical skills and knowledge, they could not be used because there was no way to systematically identify and credential them in advance. In addition, there was neither sufficient time nor capability to accomplish these tasks in the aftermath of the attacks.

The anthrax attacks in the fall of 2001 reinforced the need for pre-identified and trained supplemental healthcare personnel to assist with public health emergency operations such as mass antibiotic dispensing or mass immunizations. During the anthrax response, medication was provided to almost 40,000 individuals, which tested the capabilities of the current medical personnel available. If the event had been much larger, the responders may have been overwhelmed and additional personnel would have been needed.

Out of these tragedies, the USA Freedom Corps was established to provide Americans with meaningful opportunities to serve. The USA Freedom Corps became the umbrella agency for the existing organizations of AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Peace Corps. The newly organized Citizen Corps joined these well-established volunteer organizations.

Citizen Corps was created with the primary purpose to coordinate volunteer activities that will make our communities safer, more resilient, and better prepared to respond to any emergency situation. The different organizations within the Citizen Corps provide opportunities for people to participate, depending on their skills and personal interests, in a range of organizations to make their families, their homes, and their communities safer from the threats of crime, terrorism, and disasters of all kinds.

Citizen Corps offers citizens the opportunity to volunteer through the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), Neighborhood Watch, Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS), and Fire Corps.

The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) plays an integral part in the overall preparedness and response strategy. It provides a way for citizens to offer their skills and expertise during public health emergencies, as well as promote preparedness throughout the year.

Pre-identifying, training, and organizing volunteer medical, non-medical, and public health professionals as a way to strengthen their communities, is the core of the MRC concept. Now, with the MRC in place, a formerly untapped community resource is available to the community in emergencies and ongoing efforts in public health.

Overview of Medical Reserve Corps

The Medical Reserve Corps is a partner program of Citizen Corps, a national network of volunteers dedicated to ensuring hometown security. Citizen Corps, along with the Corporation for National and Community Service, and the Peace Corps are all part of the President's USA Freedom Corps, which promotes volunteerism and service throughout the nation. The Medical Reserve Corps was founded after President Bush's 2002 State of the Union Address, in which he asked all Americans to volunteer in support of their country. The MRC is housed under the Office of the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR) within the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

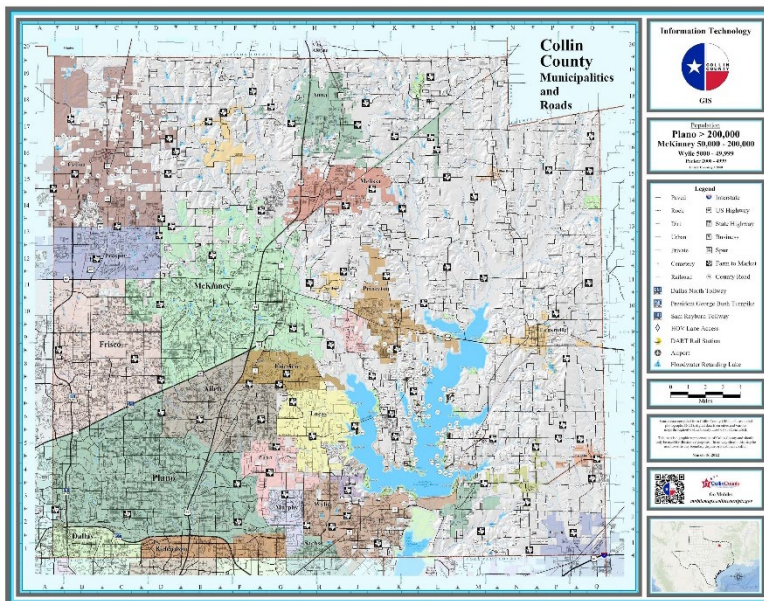


MRC units are community-based and function as a way to locally organize and utilize volunteers. Our volunteers may be medical or non-medical professionals who want to donate their time and expertise to promote healthy living throughout the year and to prepare for and respond to emergencies. MRC volunteers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

MRC volunteer professionals vary in occupations and skills. Volunteers may include medical and public health professionals such as physicians, nurses, pharmacists, dentists, veterinarians, and epidemiologists. Other non-medical members are needed such as interpreters, chaplains, office workers, legal advisors, mental health counselors, and engineers who can fill other vital MRC support positions.

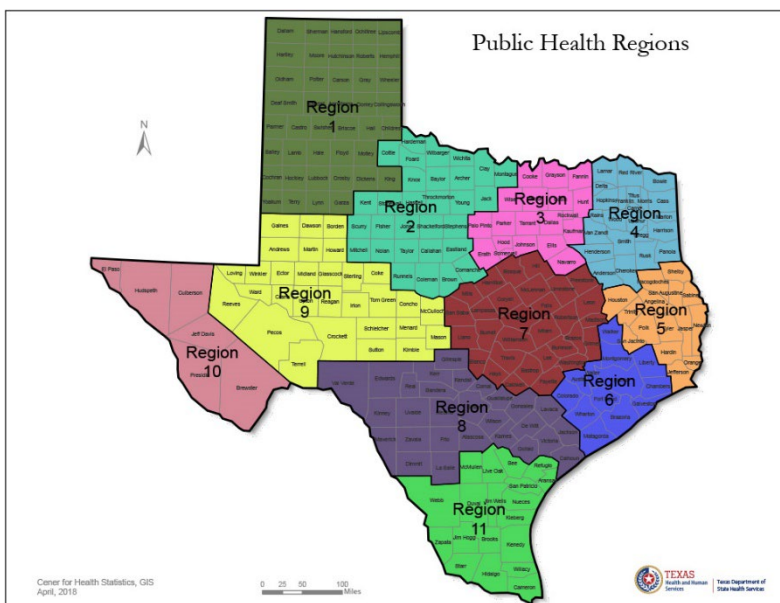
Public Health

Collin County covers a large geographic area with a million citizens, and includes the Collin County areas of Allen, Anna, Blue Ridge, Branch, Carrollton, Celina, Copeville, Dallas, Fairview, Farmersville, Frisco, Garland, Josephine, Lavon, Lowry Crossing, Lucas, McKinney, Melissa, Murphy, Nevada, New Hope, Parker, Plano, Princeton, Prosper, Richardson, Royse City, Sachse, Saint Paul, Van Alstyne, Westminster, Weston, and Wylie.



The location that an MRC member may respond to is not necessarily pre-determined, but may be inside or outside the volunteer’s home area. Since an emergency may only affect part of an area, members may have the opportunity to serve in one of the other counties in the health district, if the need arises and if they are available.

There are ten public health districts in Texas with each region having varying amounts of MRC Volunteer programs. Situations may also arise where we are asked to help serve in the other health district areas.



Collin County MRC

Mission Statement

The mission of the Collin County Medical Reserve Corps is to protect and promote the health and the wellbeing of the residents of Collin County.

Goal

The goal of the Collin County Medical Reserve Corps is to deploy qualified, trained, medical and non-medical volunteers, as needed, to assist with public health emergencies and preparedness activities in Collin County.

Objectives

- To strive to fulfill the U.S. Surgeon General's four public health priority areas: promoting disease prevention, improving health literacy, eliminating health disparities, enhancing public health preparedness.
- To enhance the medical and emergency response capability and the surge capacity of Collin County.
- To provide trained volunteers to assist in the mass dispensing of medications or vaccines in the event of a public health emergency.
- To attract and train professionals from various healthcare and non-healthcare disciplines to provide support to Collin County Health Care Services.
- To provide a coordinated response effort of volunteer professionals from various medical and non-medical disciplines during an emergency.

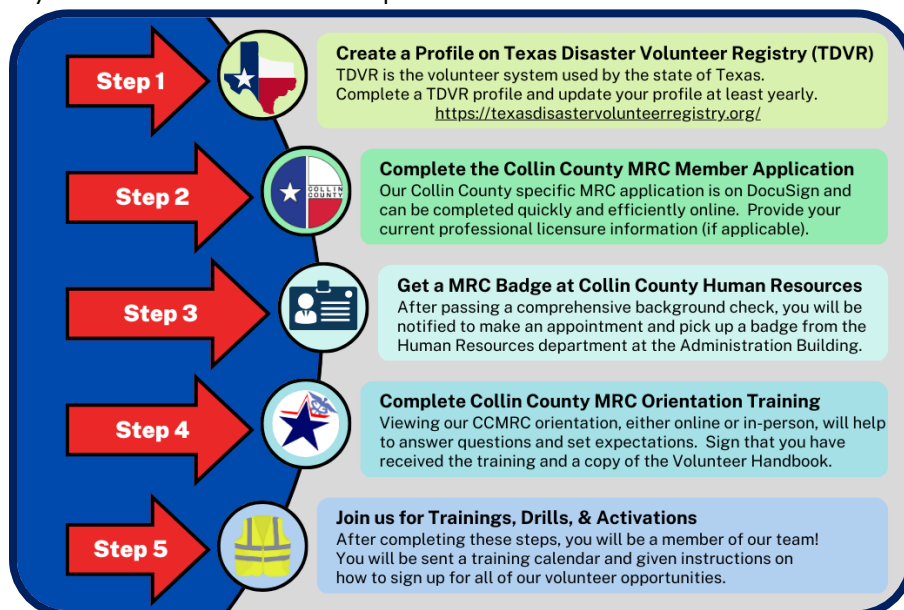
Structure

The Collin County MRC is funded by two grant programs, (1) Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP), and (2) Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI). The PHEP and CRI grants are managed and administered at a local level by Collin County Health Care Services. Both grants have required capabilities that must be met to prove the funding supports community readiness. The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) has a Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator who manages the volunteers, their applications, and training opportunities. The MRC Coordinator is part of the PHEP team which consists of a PHEP Coordinator, PHEP Planners, a Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Coordinator and an Administrative Assistant. All PHEP team members are managed by Collin County Health Care Services.

MRC Membership Requirements

- Be a citizen of the United States of America, a noncitizen national of the United States, a lawful permanent resident or an alien authorized to work in the U.S.
- Reside or work in or near Collin County
- Be at least 18 years of age
- Complete a Texas Disaster Volunteer Registry (TDVR) profile and update the appropriate sections of the profile yearly (<https://texasdisastervolunteerregistry.org/>)
 - Professional licenses should be updated in the “Occupations” section any time that there is a change or an expiration
- Complete the Collin County MRC application
 - Provide current professional licensure information (if applicable) and renewal dates
- Agree to and pass a comprehensive background investigation
- Pick up a MRC photo identification badge from Collin County Human Resources at 2300 Bloomdale Road, Suite #4117, McKinney, Texas 75071
 - Business hours for Human Resources are Monday – Friday
 - 8:30 am – 11:30 am and 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm
 - A form of photo identification (driver's license or other government issued identification) is required to receive a badge
- Attend and complete an online or in-person Collin County MRC orientation

Once a MRC member has received his/her badge and completed the orientation, he/she will be able to participate in disaster deployment training and exercises through the Collin County Medical Reserve Corps.



Types of Volunteer Service

Roles and responsibilities depend on the member's expertise, interest, and training. All volunteer service with the MRC Program is optional depending on the volunteer's experience and interest. Below is just a snapshot of the types of activities in which MRC Volunteers may be involved.

During an Emergency

- Medical-related Volunteer
 - Prophylaxis (immunization and dispensing medications)
 - Clinic preparation (fill syringes, measure medications, etc.)
 - Interviews for patient/client history
 - First responder (initial assessment and vital signs)
 - Triage
 - Treatment
 - Health education
 - Phone screening and consulting
 - Distribution of medications and supplies from SNS (Strategic National Stockpile)
 - Communicable disease control measures
 - Supporting health needs of vulnerable populations
 - Integration with local, regional, and statewide initiatives
 - Shelter care
- Non-Medical Volunteer
 - Patient intake (distributing forms, assisting clients with forms, etc.)
 - Information/communication
 - People movers/crowd control
 - Interpreters
 - Amateur radio operators
 - General administrative tasks
 - Record keeping/data management
 - Providing comfort to those affected



Non-Emergency

- Medical and Non-Medical Volunteers
 - Assist with Back 2 School vaccination clinics
 - Staff community preparedness fairs
 - Participate in preparedness training and exercises
 - Assist with general administrative projects at the health department
 - Assist with providing health education to community groups

Scope of Volunteer Activity

The safety and well-being of our MRC volunteers is the first priority during any MRC related activity. To ensure safety and well-being, MRC volunteers are given roles that best fit their skill sets and experience.

Medical Volunteers

For volunteers with medical training and experience, the scope of the volunteer's clinical work is determined by law. Some restrictions on this scope of practice may be changed in the event of a public health emergency, and volunteers will be notified and trained in the event that the scope of their work changes.

The status of a volunteer's professional license may also affect the scope of activity. Any changes in a volunteer's licensure status (for example, license expiration) must be reported to the MRC Coordinator prior to volunteering in a medical capacity. Failure to do so may result in termination of the volunteer relationship.

Some training exercises and real events do not require medical volunteers. A volunteer with a medical background is always welcome to participate in activities as a non-medical volunteer.

Non-Medical Volunteers

For volunteers without specific medical training and experience, the scope of work is determined by the type of activity where volunteers are needed, whether it is an emergency or a non-emergency event.

The volunteer's specific role will be determined by the leadership of the emergency response activity or by the MRC Coordinator. There are many volunteer opportunities for people without a medical background, especially in times of emergency.



Volunteering Levels

MRC will offer flexibility and allow volunteers to choose their desired level of participation and commitment. MRC members can decide how much time they are able to donate to the organization depending on their personal time constraints. The three levels of commitment and the training requirements associated with each are provided in the table below.

<u>Basic Level</u>
<p><i>Basic Level members may respond to disasters and are required to attend at least one yearly drill, training, or meeting. The mandatory training requirement below must be completed within one year of becoming a member.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collin County Medical Reserve Corps Orientation (Online) • FEMA Incident Command System (ICS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ICS 100 (Online) ○ ICS 700 (Online)
<u>Intermediate Level</u>
<p><i>Intermediate Level members should plan to attend at least three trainings or meetings per year. Basic Level training is required and members should acquire the additional trainings listed below.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMA Incident Command System (ICS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ICS 200 (Online) ○ ICS 800 (Online) • Medical Countermeasures Awareness for Public Health Emergencies (Online)
<u>Advanced Level</u>
<p><i>Advanced Level membership includes a leadership role. At this level, members should plan to attend at least one drill and five meetings per year. Basic and Intermediate Level trainings are required and members should acquire the additional trainings listed below.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weapons of Mass Destruction (Online) • Strategic National Stockpile Overview Course (Online)



Training

Training provides volunteers the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their work effectively, safely, and with confidence. It also provides the MRC Coordinator with clear documentation that the volunteer was provided with the information that they needed to carry out their duties competently.

The Collin County MRC Program provides training for volunteers in a variety of methods. Some methods of training, such as Just-in-Time Training (JITT), are used primarily during emergency response operations or large scale exercises. Other methods of training are listed below.

Modes of delivering training include:

- Short briefings – as included in our “Just-in-Time” project specific training
- Classroom instruction
- Workshops
- Exercises – drills, tabletop, functional, and full-scale
- Self-paced online courses

****All trainings are offered at no cost to MRC Volunteers.***

Volunteer Training Platform

Volunteers are required to participate in an online learning platform called MRC TRAIN. The national MRC internet learning platform can be found at www.train.org/mrc.

Volunteers and Unit Leaders can find content on a variety of subjects to gain additional knowledge online. Collin County MRC encourages members who seek learning resources to use MRC TRAIN.

Volunteer Time Sheets

As part of our grant requirements, MRC volunteers are asked to track all training and volunteer time by submitting a volunteer time sheet. After the volunteer has completed a training, the volunteer should save the certificate, if available, as a PDF and email it to the MRC Coordinator. Within 3 days of training completion, a time sheet can be filled out using the time sheet linked at the bottom of the main CCMRC webpage. Please be sure to always fill out the event location. As a volunteer, if you are completing a training virtually, please use the address where you are physically located at the time of the training (your home, work, etc. address). All trainings, virtual and in-person, and other volunteer hours require a time sheet, unless otherwise stated by the MRC Coordinator.



Communication

We make every effort to stay in regular contact with all MRC members and utilize a variety of methods to distribute information. Methods of communication are listed below. These methods will vary depending on the situation (ongoing interactions versus a formal call-out for an emergency situation). No volunteer's contact information will be shared for non-MRC purposes or without that person's explicit consent.

- Everbridge keeps volunteers informed through messages on a multi-modal (cell phone, landlines, and emails) approach for critical communication about deployment activities.
- Better Impact is a platform that assists in scheduling activities and ensures that members can stay up to date on current opportunities. It also allows members to view important updates, training materials, and other volunteer documents. A link to the CCMRC's Better Impact application will be sent out to all complete members. This platform has a messaging option that may be utilized at times.
 - My ImpactPage.com Login: <http://myimpactpage.com/>
 - Mobile MyImpactPage Login: <http://myimpactpage.mobi/>
- Email will be used as a primary form of communication for members.
- Texas Disaster Volunteer Registry (TDVR) also has a messaging option that may be used by CCMRC as well as other members of the MRC network.

Code of Conduct

All volunteers of the Collin County MRC Program shall meet the following standards of conduct.

As a Collin County MRC Volunteer, I shall:

- Put safety FIRST in all MRC activities and always promote safe work practices.
- Dress appropriately for the job assignment and environment.
- Follow the guidelines of Incident Command System (ICS).
- Accept the chain of command and respect each other regardless of position.
- Adhere to the Collin County dress code policy and wear the photo identification badge provided by Collin County at all times.
- Follow all procedures to the best of my ability at all times.
- Reveal any potential or actual conflicts of interest as they arise.
- Respect and use all equipment appropriately.
- Maintain confidentiality according to the "Collin County Health Care Services Confidentiality Agreement."

- Remain within my professional scope of practice. Maintain and abide by the standards of my profession, including licensure, certification, and/or training.
- Maintain a high level of honesty and transparency while performing volunteer duties.
- Report injuries, illnesses, and accidents to the appropriate staff member immediately.
- Refer any request from the media for information or comments directly to my direct supervisor, project lead, Public Information Officer (PIO), or MRC Coordinator.
- Refrain from carrying weapons to a deployment
- Avoid situations that involve conflicts of interest and refrain from actions that may be perceived as such.
- Respect the cultures, beliefs, opinions, and decisions of others.
- Treat others with courtesy, sensitivity, tact, consideration, and humility.

As a Collin County MRC Volunteer, I shall not:

- Self-deploy as a Collin County MRC member in any situation.
- Act in the capacity of a MRC Volunteer at any time without prior authorization/deployment from the Collin County MRC Program.
- Use Collin County MRC or any partner agency/organization equipment or resources for personal use.
- Solicit, in any form (requesting money, support, or participation), for products, groups, organizations, or causes which are unrelated to MRC volunteering.
- Accept or seek any financial advantage or gain as a result of my affiliation with the Collin County MRC; this includes selling merchandise or services.
- Disclose any confidential Medical Reserve Corps information.
- Participate in political activities and discussions while performing MRC duties.
- Use disruptive behavior including behavior that is dangerous to myself and others; this includes acts of violence, physical or sexual abuse or harassment.
- Use profane language and/or engage in disruptive behavior including what could be considered physical or sexual abuse or harassment.
- Respond for duty under the influence of alcohol, prescription/non-prescription medication, or any other substances that may influence my ability to perform assigned tasks to the very best of my ability.
- Transport, store, and/or consume alcoholic beverages and/or illegal substances while performing duties or attending training.
- Wear Medical Reserve Corps attire while under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances.
- Participate in illegal activity.



Confidentiality

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they may be exposed to while serving as a volunteer. This includes information involving staff, volunteers, patients, or any other information deemed sensitive. All MRC Volunteers will receive training on, and must strictly adhere to, HIPAA policy in regards to confidentiality.

Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination of the volunteer's relationship with the program or other corrective action.

Prior to participating in volunteer activities, all MRC Volunteers will need to sign a copy of the Client Confidentiality Form stating that he/she has read and understands the policy. A current, initialed copy of this form will be maintained with each volunteer's records. A copy is provided with the Collin County MRC application.

Harassment, Discrimination, Substance Use, & Violence

The Collin County MRC is committed to providing a work environment free from harassment and discrimination 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 Collin County MRC 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.

If you feel that you may have been the subject of discrimination or harassment, you should contact the MRC Coordinator. Any reports of discrimination or harassment will be examined impartially and resolved promptly. The PHEP team will determine the volunteer status of any volunteer found to be verbally or physically inappropriate during an activation, training, or meeting of the MRC.

The Collin County MRC is dedicated to a safe, healthy, and drug-free work environment. All MRC 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.

The Collin County MRC is committed to our volunteer safety and health. The MRC does not tolerate acts or threats of violence committed by or against a volunteer, and therefore prohibits workplace violence. In order to ensure a safe working environment, please abstain from carrying a weapon on any property that prohibits weapons. If a volunteer is threatened while serving as an MRC volunteer, he/she should immediately report the event to the nearest person of authority (Team Leader, Supervisor, Safety Officer, Security/Police, etc.).

Dress Code

The Collin County Human Resource Department will issue MRC identification badges to each volunteer. All volunteers must wear their badges and keep them visible during all trainings activations, community events, and exercises. Badges remain the property of Collin County and must be returned or destroyed upon termination of volunteer membership.

Upon receiving a Collin County volunteer badge, vetted volunteers may receive a vest, or other uniform and/or equipment during an activation, deployment, or community service with the MRC organization. Members are required to wear this safety gear as a part of their MRC uniform to clearly identify them as being a vetted volunteer. Upon separation from the Collin County MRC, the former volunteer will be asked to return any safety gear and/or equipment back to the MRC Coordinator as appropriate.

In addition, all volunteers should maintain an appropriate dress code that includes clothes that are clean, neat, and without tears or rips. Clothes should be appropriate for the work environment and not contain offensive material, slogans, or graphics.

Liability and Workers Compensation

The Collin County MRC intends to mitigate and prevent risks to volunteers. Every attempt will be made to reduce risk to volunteers through training, education, and the use of universal precautions. Be aware, however, that some unanticipated risk possibilities may be present, both during a public health emergency and during routine public health events. Collin County does not carry Texas Workers' Compensation insurance for its volunteers. Volunteers are not provided insurance that could otherwise be expected to compensate or reimburse them for injuries or medical-related expenses that may occur as a result of their services. This includes, but is not limited to, injuries that might occur in a workplace, field of deployment, or in motor vehicle accidents while performing volunteer services or duties.

Nevertheless, volunteers are protected from legal liability under the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997. Under the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997, people who volunteer for non-profit organizations or government entities may not be held liable for any harm (except for a harm caused by the operation of a motor vehicle or a harm caused by criminal conduct or gross or reckless misconduct) that they cause while engaged in volunteer activity.

In addition, the Federal Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act may protect the volunteer if a federal disaster declaration is made by the Secretary of Department of Health and Human Services due to a threat that poses a credible risk of a public health emergency. Immunity from tort liability is granted to individuals providing aid within the scope of the declaration. There are exceptions to the PREP Act if the action by a volunteer causes a serious harm, death, or willful misconduct. Actions that are outside the scope of the PREP Act declaration are not covered.

Activation / Deployment

The MRC has guidelines for deployment in order to manage emergency response in an organized, efficient manner. The Collin County MRC can be activated by the Collin County Judge, the Health Care Director, or the Emergency Management Coordinator. No unauthorized individual may deploy MRC members. Although the primary focus of Collin County MRC members is to respond to events within Collin County, members may also be deployed in regional, statewide, or national disasters. Volunteers should never self-deploy as a Collin County MRC member in any situation.

Members will be notified of activation through the Everbridge notification system which may contact members via text message, phone, or email. The Everbridge notification number used for Collin County MRC is **(972) 548-5503**. Volunteers are encouraged to save this phone number in their cell phones. The Texas Disaster Volunteer Registry (TDVR) and Better Impact may be used as secondary notification systems.

Fitness for Duty

A healthy and safe environment is important and no job is considered to be so important or urgent that it cannot be done safely. As an MRC volunteer, you have a responsibility for your own safety and health. Fitness for duty involves being alert and aware of your current situation and watching out for any environmental hazards.

Volunteers should complete a self-assessment of their fitness for duty prior to deployment. Members will not be asked to fill any position for which they feel they do not meet the requirements.

- **Physical Fitness:** Prior to duty assignment, MRC members will be notified of the expected level of fitness for each job assignment. Members should only accept positions that they are physically able to fulfill.
- **Emotional Fitness:** MRC members participating in a response or deployment may witness disturbing or traumatic events, experience difficult situations, and/or work long hours in austere conditions. MRC members should be in a healthy emotional state prior to deployment.
- **Financial Fitness:** MRC members are not compensated for their time or travel expenses by Collin County. The Collin County MRC will not ask volunteers to disclose financial information, but encourages volunteers to consider the effect that a deployment would have on their financial status.



Disciplinary Action

- Collin County MRC members, while performing duties or rendering services as an MRC representative, are expected to maintain high standards of conduct at all times.
- Disciplinary action may be initiated to correct inappropriate performance, work-related behavior, or behavior which reflects adversely upon Collin County, the MRC, or other MRC members.
- The degree of disciplinary action shall relate to the gravity of the improper conduct.
- A violation of any Collin County Medical Reserve Corps policy or a change in the member's criminal history may result in disciplinary action. However, a member may receive disciplinary action for offenses other than those enumerated in these policies.

Termination of Membership

A member of the Collin County MRC may be dismissed for any action that violates the Collin County Medical Reserve Corps policies or any other improper conduct or performance that constitutes cause for dismissal. Actions that can lead to termination include, but are not limited to:

- Self-deployment as an MRC volunteer without assignment or direction
- Conviction for any offense that would eliminate consideration of an applicant for membership
- Willful destruction of Collin County property
- Violation of Collin County Code of Conduct or Volunteer Management Policies

Discontinuation of Membership

Members may cease volunteering with Collin County MRC at any time. We ask that a member who wishes to end participation in the MRC program, please inform the MRC Coordinator or designee in writing at mrc@co.collin.tx.us. Collin County MRC badges and any issued equipment should be returned by mail or in person to Collin County Health Care Services.

Readiness and Preparedness

In an emergency, we understand that your family, friends, and neighbors are going to come first – before you volunteer to help the general community. We highly recommend that you take action to help ensure that you and those you care about are prepared for an emergency. Ensuring that you are well-prepared at home and at work to deal with an emergency situation will allow you to be ready to respond as a volunteer when you are needed. Emergency preparedness requires proper planning, organization, and practice, but the pay-off is invaluable.

Be Informed

One of the most important things to do is to be informed. Learn about the possible emergencies that could happen in your area. Learn about the emergency plans that exist within your local government (e.g., state, county) and other locations specific to you: schools, places of work, etc.

Additionally, when an emergency occurs, your ability to access information is going to be very important, so make sure that you are able to stay informed. One way to do this is having a battery-powered radio available in case the power goes out.

Keep Training and Maintain Preparedness

The MRC 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 to the extent in which they have prepared their families and homes in advance for emergency situations. When you are notified to report to a local incident site, you should be prepared to be on site for at least 12 hours. Therefore, you should remember to bring any personal necessities with you, such as water, snacks, phone chargers, and any medications you require.

For more information on deployment, visit NACCHO MRC Deployment Readiness Guide: <https://www.naccho.org/programs/public-health-preparedness/medical-reserve-corps>

There are many other resources available that go into more detail about how to prepare for emergencies. The MRC Coordinator and other MRC volunteers may have recommendations for more preparedness resources.

