



Department of Health  
and Mental Hygiene  
**Office of Preparedness  
and Response**

**MARYLAND RESPONDS MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS**

# **VOLUNTEER DEPLOYMENT GUIDE**



**MARYLAND  
RESPONDS**  
MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS

# INTRODUCTION

This is a quick reference to help prepare you for deployment with the Maryland Responds Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). As a Maryland Responder, you should use this guide to augment – not replace – training and preparation for deployment. This guide is divided into five major sections:

1. Steady State: How do I prepare myself, my family, and my community for emergencies?
2. Pre-deployment: How do I prepare for deployment?
3. Deployment: What policies and procedures should I follow while deployed in the field?
4. Post-deployment: How do I give feedback and request support following a deployment?
5. Resources: Where can I find more information and additional resources?

For more detailed information on deployments and other topics, refer to the Maryland Responds website at: <http://mdr.dhmh.maryland.gov>.

## ASSEMBLE AN EMERGENCY SUPPLY KIT

Assemble an emergency supply kit with items to take care of yourself, your family, and your pets for three or more days. Keep your kit in a sturdy and easy-to-carry backpack or duffel bag. Prepare an emergency supply kit for your home, work, and car.

### Emergency Supply Kit Supplies

Recommended emergency supply kit supplies include, but are not limited to:

- Water (for drinking and sanitation, one gallon per person per day)
- Food (nonperishable)
- Can opener (manual, for nonperishable canned food)
- Radio (extra batteries as required)
- Flashlight (extra batteries as required)
- First aid supplies
- Hygiene items
- Soap or alcohol-based (60%-95%) hand sanitizer
- Matches
- Whistle to signal for help
- Clothing (as appropriate for the season or type of emergency)
- Medications or medical supplies
- Copies of important records
- Dust mask to help filter contaminated air
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Local maps

Download an emergency supply kit checklist at:  
[www.1.usa.gov/1a7qA1e](http://www.1.usa.gov/1a7qA1e).

## Special Needs

You may need to include some additional supplies to meet the needs of all family members, such as children, pets, and those with special medical requirements:

- Baby supplies (e.g., bottles, formula, baby food, and diapers)
- Pet supplies (e.g., pet food, ID tag and collar, pet carrier, leash, medical records)
- Medical supplies (e.g., hearing aids with extra batteries, glasses, contact lenses, syringes, or a cane)

## Maintain Your Kits

Maintaining your emergency supply kit is just as important as putting it together.

- Change stored food and water supplies every six months. Talk to your doctor about storing medications.
- Rethink your needs every year and update your kits as your needs change. Replace batteries, update clothes (winter and summer items), check expiration dates on your medications, etc.

## MAKE A FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

Develop your own family emergency plan. Practice it regularly. Ensure that every family member knows what to do during an emergency.

Planning for a disaster means knowing what to do in each possible situation. Whether you have to evacuate your home or shelter in place, it is important to have a plan ahead of time. After you know your family and home are safe, you can concentrate on helping others.

Consider the following tips when developing your family emergency plan.

## Stay Informed

Learn about the hazards that may affect your community, the risks you face from these hazards, and your community's plans for warning, sheltering, and evacuation. Subscribe to alert services to receive the latest updates on emergency situations. Many communities have systems that will send text alerts or e-mails to let you know about bad weather, road closings, local emergencies, etc. Sign up by visiting your local emergency management agency's Web page.

## Shelter in Place

Sometimes it's best to stay where you are to avoid hazardous conditions. "Shelter in place" means to take immediate shelter inside a sturdy building wherever you are – at home, work, school, or in between. Local authorities may instruct you to shelter in place if chemical or radiological contaminants are released into the environment. To shelter in place:

- Choose a room in advance for your shelter. A large room, preferably with a water supply, is desirable – for example, a master bedroom that is connected to a bathroom. Find the safe spots in your home for each type of disaster. For example, during an earthquake, practice "drop, cover, and hold on" under a sturdy desk or table. During a tornado, shelter in a lower-level or interior room without windows.
- Bring your family and pets inside.
- Lock your doors and close all windows, air vents, and fireplace dampers.
- Turn off fans, air conditioners, and forced-air heating systems.
- Bring your emergency supply kit unless you have reason to believe it has been contaminated.
- Watch TV, listen to the radio, or check the Internet often for official news and instructions as they become available.

# STEADY STATE

## Evacuation

Because each disaster is different, make sure you identify a meeting place in your neighborhood, a meeting place just outside your neighborhood, and a meeting place out of town.

- Determine the best escape routes from your home. Find two ways out of each room and your neighborhood.
- Establish designated rally points for your family based on whether you are likely to be at home or at work, school, etc.
- Contact your utility companies for shutoff requirements (e.g., for natural gas, water, electricity). Unplug everything except essential appliances to reduce fire hazards. Show each family member how and when to turn off the gas, water, and electricity at the main switches.
- Bring your emergency supply kit with you.



## Family Communications

Your family members may not be together when a disaster strikes. Plan for how you will contact one another in different situations.

Think about the places where your family spends time. Learn about the emergency plans of your child's school and of your employer. Find out how they will communicate with families during an emergency. Keep a list of important phone numbers and addresses (closest hospital, poison control center, etc.).

Complete a contact card for each family member; include phone numbers, meeting places, and any other important information. Have family members keep these cards handy in a wallet, purse or backpack. Keep a recent photo of your family members for reunification purposes.

Text before calling. Text messages usually get transmitted during an emergency, whereas calls may fail. Call out of your area before in your area. During a disaster, it is often easier to call long distance (100 miles outside the affected area). Your out-of-area contact may help separated family members communicate.

## Insurance and Important Records

Review your property, health, and life insurance policies every year. To reduce your risk of loss:

- Consider getting flood insurance if you live in a flood-prone area.
- Make a record of your personal property for insurance purposes. Include personal belongings in your inventory.
- Take photos of your property and valuable items before and after the disaster.
- Consider opening an emergency savings account. Also, keep small denominations of money or traveler's checks at home (ATM access may be limited or unavailable).

# STEADY STATE

- Store important documents in a safe place, such as a safe deposit box in a bank. Make paper or electronic copies of important documents for your emergency supply kit.

## Health Information

During a public health emergency, you may need to provide as much medical history as possible for you and your family.

- Write down blood types and any current or past medical condition, allergy, prescription medication (with dosage) or surgery.
- Make copies of your vaccination records and include them in your emergency supply kit.
- For a template, visit: [www.rxresponse.org/rx-on-the-run](http://www.rxresponse.org/rx-on-the-run).

## People with Access and Functional Needs

If you or someone in your family has an access or functional need, you may have to take additional emergency preparedness steps (e.g., special arrangements to receive warnings, transportation to a shelter). Find out about special assistance in your community. Register with your local emergency management agency so needed help can be provided.

## Caring for Your Animals

Animals are also affected by disasters. Make a plan for your pets or livestock in case a disaster strikes.

- Gather pet supplies, including a pet carrier and leash. Make sure your pet has proper ID and up-to-date veterinary records. Carry a copy of your pet's vaccine records.
- Make proper arrangements for livestock (e.g., ID, evacuation, shelter, food, water).



## PREPARE FOR DEPLOYMENT

All Maryland Responders, regardless of professional background, must reach Ready Responder status to be eligible for participation in Maryland Responds activities and deployments. To reach Ready Responder status, complete the steps listed below.

For more information and to download required resources, visit: <http://bit.ly/MDRReadiness>.

### 1. Complete your Responder profile.

- Sign up to volunteer with Maryland Responds through the Maryland Responds Registry: <https://mdresponds.dhmh.maryland.gov/>.
- Complete all sections of your Responder profile. In the "Occupation" tab, be sure to include your professional license number, expiration date and place of practice (if applicable).

### 2. Complete the Ready Responder Training courses.

Complete the following minimum training courses:

- Maryland Responds Orientation (Online: <http://bit.ly/MDRonline-ori>), OR (Inclass: <http://bit.ly/MDRcalendar>)
- Introduction to the National Incident Management System, IS-700 (Online: <http://bit.ly/IS-700>)
- Introduction to the Incident Command System, ICS-100 (Online: <http://bit.ly/IS-100>)

Upload your training certificates to your Responder profile for verification.

### **3. Sign and submit the Maryland Responds Liability and Confidentiality agreements.**

- Confidentiality Agreement: <http://bit.ly/MDRConf>
- Liability Policy: <http://bit.ly/MDRLiabi>

### **4. Obtain your Responder ID badge**

Maryland Responds ID badges are designed for use during authorized functions to identify volunteers as members of the Maryland Responds MRC. You must have your ID badge on you at all times during deployment. If your occupation or licensing information has changed, you will need a new badge.

For your Responder ID badge, submit a headshot photo (passport quality) and mailing address where you can sign for certified mail to the Maryland Responds state program at [mdresponds.dhmf@maryland.gov](mailto:mdresponds.dhmf@maryland.gov).

### **Ready Responder Status**

Congratulations! By completing the steps above, you have reached Ready Responder status. Next you will receive your Ready Responder kit containing your Responder ID badge, uniform, field guide and more.

## RESPOND TO ACTIVATION NOTIFICATION

During emergencies in which local resources are exhausted, medical or public health volunteers may be needed. When the Maryland Responds MRC is activated, qualified volunteers will receive an activation notification through the Maryland Responds Registry. Only qualified volunteers who have completed the deployment eligibility requirements will be assigned a role and deployed. Thus, it is crucial to complete deployment eligibility steps as soon as possible.

The activation notification will include a request for your availability to deploy. Follow the directions listed in the activation notification to submit your availability status. You will be contacted by an administrator if you are assigned a deployment role.

## FOLLOW MOBILIZATION PROCEDURES

Once you receive confirmation from the Maryland Responds MRC, follow these mobilization procedures:

### **Review Deployment Packet**

Prior to your deployment, the Maryland Responds MRC will provide you with a deployment packet that will contain incident-specific and logistical information, including:

- Incident-specific precautions and potential hazards
- Nature of deployment site and work conditions
- Location of staging area and on-site contact information
- Deployment go kit checklist
- Position description and job action sheet
- Just in Time Training (JITT) materials

## **Execute Your Family Preparedness Plans**

Set your family preparedness plan into motion. Notify relatives, friends, or neighbors of your deployment. Give them your contact numbers. Take care of any personal business before you leave (child care, bills, mail delivery, house-sitting, pets, living will, etc.)

## **Pack Your Deployment Go Kit**

If there are incident-specific packing recommendations (for example, cold weather clothing or personal food supply) they will be listed in your deployment packet. In general, pack to be as self-sufficient as possible, but bring only necessary items. Consider the following recommendations for packing your deployment go kit.

### **Identification**

Bring the following forms of identification with you when you report to your deployment site:

- Maryland Responds ID badge
- Government ID (driver's license)
- Proof of professional license (if applicable)

### **Clothing**

- Pack comfortable shoes and clothing that is appropriate for your deployment (e.g., scrubs).
- Bring enough clothes to last for the duration of your deployment, since laundry facilities may not be available.
- If you are staying overnight, bring shower sandals.

### **Food and water**

Food and water will be provided at most deployment sites; however, depending on the incident, this is not guaranteed. Bring food or snacks that you can eat "on the go." A refillable water bottle may be useful as well.

## STAGING AREA AND SIGN-IN PROCEDURES

Staging and sign-in procedures will vary from incident to incident. Basic sign-in procedures will include the following:

1. Report to the volunteer staging area.
2. Present your identification and sign in.
3. Receive briefing and supplies (incident briefing, just in time training, job action sheet, supplies, personal protective equipment, instructions regarding demobilization procedures, etc.).



## INCIDENT COMMAND

Incident command structures are flexible and scalable to situational needs and resources. Thus, it is important to note that not all deployments will have the same volunteer positions. When you arrive on site, review the incident command structure and identify to whom you will report.



## SCOPE OF PRACTICE

As a Maryland Responder, you are required to provide within your scope of practice. Never provide care beyond your professional level of expertise. When necessary health needs exceed your scope of practice or level of expertise, consult your supervisor.

## YOUR HEALTH AND SAFETY

### **Volunteer Protections**

The state of Maryland has written laws that provide the legal protections to state employees; as a volunteer acting on the state's behalf, you also receive these protections. Specifically, you are covered by both workers' compensation and for liability during a Maryland Responds MRC authorized deployment.

These legal protections only cover volunteers who are registered with and recognized by the Maryland Responds MRC.

### **Accountability**

Upon arrival at the deployment site, report to the volunteer staging area to check in. You must sign in and out when leaving your station (including for meals). At the end of your shift, you will also sign out. Following your deployment, Maryland Responds staff will follow up with you to ensure that you arrived home safely.

## Standard Precautions

While performing your deployment role, you may have accidental exposure to blood, bodily fluids, or other potentially infectious materials. To prevent such exposures, you must use standard precautions.

Standard precautions are based on the principle that all blood, bodily fluids, secretions, excretions (except sweat), non-intact skin, and mucous membranes may contain transmissible infectious agents.

When providing care, always:

- Wear gloves if hand contact with blood, bodily fluids, respiratory secretions, or potentially contaminated surfaces is expected.
- Wear a disposable gown if clothes might become soiled with a patient's blood, bodily fluids, or respiratory secretions.
- Change gloves and gowns after each patient encounter and wash hands or use alcohol hand gel immediately after removing gloves.
- Wash hands or use alcohol hand gel before and after touching a patient, after touching the patient's environment, or after touching the patient's respiratory secretions, whether or not gloves are worn.
- When hands are visibly dirty or contaminated with respiratory secretions, wash hands with soap (either plain or antimicrobial) and water.



## Self-Care During Deployment

Emergency responders are at risk for behavioral and emotional issues. Practice activities that promote self-care. Make every effort to:

- Recognize that the situation you are in may be extremely stressful; no one who sees a disaster is untouched by it.
- Limit on-duty work hours to no more than 12 hours per day.
- Alternate between higher and lower stress tasks, and types of assignments, if possible.
- Use counseling assistance programs, as needed.
- Drink plenty of water and eat healthy snacks frequently (e.g., fresh fruits, whole grain foods).
- Take frequent, brief breaks from the scene, if possible.
- Talk about your emotions to process what you have seen and done.
- Perform regular check-ins with colleagues, family, and friends.
- Work with partners or in teams so that you may monitor one another's stress.
- Try to practice flexibility and patience to build resilience.

## Injury Reporting

While unlikely if following the health and safety guidelines listed above, you may still sustain an injury or exposure during your deployment. If this occurs:

- Notify the Maryland Responds MRC state program immediately.
- Complete all forms in the "Injury Report Packet" and follow directions in the packet to obtain medical treatment if necessary. Download the Injury Report Packet at: [www.bit.ly/MDResources](http://www.bit.ly/MDResources).

## DEMOBILIZATION

You should demobilize with other on-scene personnel and resources, in accordance with the Incident Commander's (IC) instructions.

### **Deactivation**

Before leaving the site, report transition notes to incoming/replacement volunteers, if applicable.

Expect to help with clean-up activities, attend a debriefing session, sign out, be contacted for follow-up, and participate in an after action survey.

### **Debriefing**

Volunteer supervisors will make every effort to provide a debriefing process following a deployment. During this debriefing, supervisors will ensure that you have access to mental health counseling during and following emergency operations, if needed.

### **After Action Survey**

Following a deployment, you will be contacted to give feedback about your experience. In an after action survey, you will have the opportunity to voice your evaluation of the overall response and provide suggestions for improvement.

## RETURNING HOME: WHAT TO EXPECT

Disasters are difficult to understand. Most people are able to adjust to returning home after disaster relief work; the time it takes to adjust, however, varies. After returning home, keep the following in mind:

- No one who sees a disaster is untouched by it.
- It is normal to feel sadness, grief, and anger about what happened and what you saw.
- Anticipate that you will experience recurring thoughts or dreams, and that they will decrease over time.
- It is natural to feel anxious about your safety and the safety of your family.
- Acknowledging your feelings will help you move forward more quickly.
- Focusing on your contributions, strengths, and abilities can help you heal if you are troubled by your experience.
- Everyone has different needs and different ways of coping.

### **Self-Care After Deployment**

- Schedule time for a vacation and gradually reintegrate into your normal life. Prepare for worldview changes that may not be shared by others in your life.
- Pay extra attention to nutrition, exercise, stress management, and rest.
- Pay extra attention to rekindling close interpersonal relationships.
- Make time for self-reflection.
- At times, try not to be in charge or the expert.
- Seek out and give social support. Check in with other relief colleagues.
- Seek professional help if extreme stress persists for more than two weeks.

## Seeking Out and Giving Social Support

Returning home will be easier if you talk with people you trust about your feelings and experiences. Share both difficult emotions, such as grief, disbelief, or frustration, as well as the joy you felt when helping those in need.

The people you worked with may understand your experiences better than anyone. Keep in touch with them through phone calls or e-mails. They may be especially helpful if your family and friends don't seem to understand what you went through. It will also allow you to support them.

## Seeking Professional Help

If stress reactions persist or interfere with your personal or work life following your deployment, seek professional help. Seek professional help if you have any of the following ongoing symptoms after returning home:

- Physical aches and pains
- Cold or flu-like symptoms
- Changes in your vision or hearing
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Limited attention span or decreased concentration
- Confusion or disorientation
- Poor work performance
- Reluctance to leave home or be alone
- Feelings of hopelessness or helplessness
- Mood swings or elevated anger
- Crying easily, prolonged sadness, or depression
- Overwhelming guilt or self-doubt

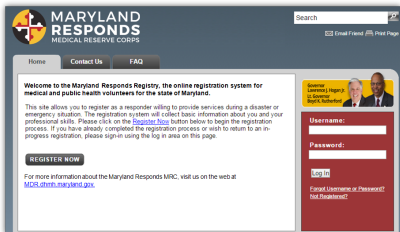
## MARYLAND RESPONDS RESOURCES

### Maryland Responds MRC Website

<http://mdr.dhmv.maryland.gov>

### Maryland Responds Registry

[www.mdresponds.dhmv.maryland.gov](http://www.mdresponds.dhmv.maryland.gov)



### Facebook

[www.facebook.com/mdresponds](http://www.facebook.com/mdresponds)

### Twitter

[www.twitter.com/MarylandOPR](http://www.twitter.com/MarylandOPR)

### LinkedIn

[www.bit.ly/LinkedInMDResponds](http://www.bit.ly/LinkedInMDResponds)

## PARTNER RESOURCES

### Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

[www.dhmv.maryland.gov](http://www.dhmv.maryland.gov)

### Office of Preparedness and Response (OP&R)

[www.bit.ly/DHMHOPR](http://www.bit.ly/DHMHOPR)

### OP&R Facebook page

[www.facebook.com/MarylandOPR](http://www.facebook.com/MarylandOPR)

# RESOURCES

**OP&R General Preparedness Information**

[www.bit.ly/oprbp](http://www.bit.ly/oprbp)

**County Mental Health Crisis Teams/Hotlines**

[www.dhmf.maryland.gov/mha](http://www.dhmf.maryland.gov/mha)

**Maryland Emergency Management Agency**

[www.mema.maryland.gov](http://www.mema.maryland.gov)

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**National Medical Reserve Corps Network**

[www.medicalreservecorps.gov](http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov)

**Ready.gov (FEMA)**

[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

**IS-22 Are you Ready?**

*An In-depth Guide to Citizen Preparedness*

[www.bit.ly/IS-22](http://www.bit.ly/IS-22)

**Emergency Management Institute Training Courses**

[www.training.fema.gov/EMI](http://www.training.fema.gov/EMI)

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration**

[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

**National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**

[www.ptsd.va.gov](http://www.ptsd.va.gov)