

Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security



Standard Operating Procedures

SOP: 5.6

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STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR APPROVAL OF ACTIVITIES OF MEMBERS OF LOCAL MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS UNITS OR DEMHS REGIONAL MRC RESPONSE TEAMS

Background:

Under Title 28 of the Connecticut General Statutes, specifically §28-1(5), Medical Reserve Corps (“MRC”) members, under the auspices of the state Department of Public Health (“DPH”), are considered “civil preparedness force” members “while engaging in authorized civil preparedness duty or while assisting or engaging in authorized training, for the purpose of eligibility for immunity from liability as provided in §28-13 and for death, disability and injury benefits as provided in §28-14.” Any member of the MRC who is called upon either by civil preparedness personnel or state or municipal police personnel to assist in any emergency shall be deemed to be engaging in civil preparedness duty while assisting in such emergency or while engaging in training under the auspices of the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, the Department of Public Safety, the Division of State Police, or a municipal police department, for the purpose of eligibility for benefits provided under §28-14. Members of the MRC who are not paid state or municipal employees may receive Title 28 protections if they are activated with the prior approval of the Commissioner of the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS). Conn. Gen. Stat. §28-7(h).

The purpose of this document is to establish a standard operating procedure for the approval of MRC activities, when requested by the local MRC unit leader, by the state Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (“DEMHS”) in order for its members to qualify for the benefits and protections provided under Title 28. The responsibility for establishing the qualifications of MRC members resides, under Conn. Gen. Stat. §28-1(5), with the state Department of Public Health and its local and intrastate regional health partners. In order to be eligible for Title 28 protections and benefits, an MRC member must also satisfy the loyalty oath requirements of Conn. Gen. Stat. §28-12. The establishment of this procedure is in keeping with the

standards established in a related opinion from the Office of the Attorney General, issued on July 20, 2006, regarding volunteer members of the state's Community Emergency Response Teams.

The following are guidelines established for the local emergency management and public health community to follow to ensure that MRC members' training and/or participation in an event or disaster are covered under Title 28.

Procedures for Approval Process:

1. Procedures for Local Emergency Management Director and MRC Unit Leader to Follow for an Emergency Activation

Whenever the local emergency management or civil preparedness director (EMD) deems it necessary to activate the members of the MRC in the case of an actual emergency he/she will:

- (1) Communicate with the MRC Unit Leader and then;
- (2) Jointly request, with the MRC Unit Leader, DEMHS approval through DEMHS Regional Coordinator, orally or by email, or by page if the request is made after regular business hours. Make sure that a response is received from the Regional Coordinator so that you know that the request has been received.
- (3) Follow up with a written request as soon as possible, but not more than **48** hours after the initial request is made.

The written request must contain:

- The date and anticipated times of the activation¹;
- Names of the MRC members involved;
- The reason for the activation or training request, including details of the proposed activities to be taken, especially in a training situation.

By submitting the names of the Team members, the local EMD and MRC Unit Leader are certifying that these members have received appropriate training under the Local MRC organization, and have been sworn in under Conn. Gen. Stat. §28-12, or are in training to be sworn in under that section.

The EMD will maintain a log of all requests submitted to DEMHS, for review by either the Office of Attorney General and/or by DEMHS.

The local MRC Unit Leader will maintain a roster of current MRC members, including their names, contact information, and training received. Annually, the local EMD will provide an updated copy of this roster to the DPH MRC Coordinator.

¹ For the purposes of Title 28 protection, "activation" means both training in preparation of and response to an emergency. It is not anticipated that Title 28 protection will be sought for routine, regularly-scheduled meetings of the MRC.

MRC members who self-dispatch to an emergency scene without the approval of the local EMD and the MRC Unit Leader will not receive Title 28 protection through DEMHS.

2. Procedures for Local Emergency Management Director and MRC Unit Leader to Follow for a Training or Pre-planned Large Scale Event Activation

Whenever the local emergency management or civil preparedness director (EMD) deems it necessary to activate the members of the MRC for training or in the case of a pre-planned, large scale event, he/she will:

- (1) Communicate with the MRC Unit Leader and then;
- (2) Jointly submit a written request for DEMHS approval through DEMHS Regional Coordinator, at least two weeks before the date of the proposed training or event. Training or event activities submitted after the date cannot be approved by DEMHS.
- (3) If the request is submitted by fax, the EMD must provide the original documentation to the DEMHS Regional Coordinator as soon as possible.

The written request must contain:

- The date and anticipated times of the activation²;
- Names of the MRC members involved;
- The reason for the activation or training request, including details of the proposed activities to be taken, especially in a training situation.

By submitting the names of the Team members, the local EMD and MRC Unit Leader are certifying that these members have received appropriate training under the Local MRC organization, and have been sworn in under Conn. Gen. Stat. §28-12, or are in training to be sworn in under that section.

If the EMD wishes to submit one form for multiple activities, specific information must be provided for each training activity.

The EMD will maintain a log of all requests submitted to DEMHS, for review by either the Office of Attorney General and/or by DEMHS.

The local MRC Unit Leader will maintain a roster of current MRC members, including their names, contact information, and training received. Annually, the local EMD will provide an updated copy of this roster to the DPH MRC Coordinator.

In order to maintain cross-disciplinary situational awareness, the EMD may also notify the local or district Public Health Director and the Regional Emergency Support Function (RESF) & chair of any activation of the MRC.

² For the purposes of Title 28 protection, "activation" means both training in preparation of and response to an emergency. It is not anticipated that Title 28 protection will be sought for routine, regularly-scheduled meetings of the MRC.

MRC members who self-dispatch to an emergency scene without the approval of the local EMD and the MRC Unit Leader will not receive Title 28 protection through DEMHS.

3. Responsibilities of DEMHS Regional Coordinator

- The DEMHS Regional Coordinator will review the request of the local EMD and forward the request with a recommendation of approval or denial, based upon the information submitted by the local EMD, to the DPH State MRC Coordinator.

If the Regional Coordinator does not recommend approval of the request, s/he will provide a brief explanation.

- The DEMHS Regional Coordinator will also:
 - Notify the local EMD of the Director's approval or denial of the activation request (see below);
 - Obtain the original written request within 48 hours of approval;
 - Supply the requesting EMD with a copy of the completed documentation;
 - Maintain a log of all requests submitted to DEMHS.

4. Responsibilities of DPH State MRC Coordinator

- The DPH State MRC Coordinator, or her designee, will then forward to the DEMHS Director of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, DPH State MRC Coordinator's recommendation of approval or denial.
- The DPH State MRC Coordinator may transmit the request to the DPH Drill and Exercise Coordinator, if necessary.
- The DPH State MRC Coordinator will maintain a log of all requests submitted to DPH.

5. Responsibilities of DEMHS Director of Emergency Management and Homeland Security

- The DEMHS Director of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, or his designee, will review the recommendations of the DEMHS Regional Coordinator and the DPH State MRC Coordinator and shall approve or deny the request.
- The office of the DEMHS Director shall provide notification of the activation/denial to:
 - DEMHS Regional Coordinator, who will notify the requesting jurisdiction;
 - Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner;
 - DPH State MRC Coordinator;
 - DEMHS Training Division (if a training event);
 - Other DEMHS Regional Coordinators;
 - Duty Officers;
 - DEMHS Operations Supervisor;
 - DEMHS Public Information Officer;
 - DEMHS Legal Advisor.

- The office of the DEMHS Director of Emergency Management and Homeland Security will maintain a log of all requests submitted to DEMHS.

Filing a Claim for Workers' Compensation:

In the event that an MRC member is injured in either a pre-approved training or real emergency event, the following procedures will be followed to file a claim with the State of Connecticut Workers' Compensation Commission.

The local EMD and/or the MRC Unit Leader will immediately make sure that the MRC member is treated for any medical issue and take all reasonable efforts to prevent further injury to the MRC member or other members.

Once the immediate medical situation is stabilized, the local EMD will notify the DEMHS Regional Coordinator of the details of the accident/ injury to the member(s) of the MRC. In addition, the local EMD will contact the third party administrator for the State of Connecticut:

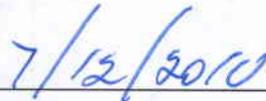
GAB Robbins North America, Inc
800 Connecticut Boulevard
East Hartford, CT 06108
Telephone # 860-256-3400
Fax# 860-291-9875

The DEMHS Regional Coordinator will immediately notify the DEMHS Emergency Management and Homeland Security Director and DPH MRC Coordinator of the accident/ injury, who will in turn notify their respective Commissioners of the incident.

The DPH State MRC Coordinator will be the initial primary point of contact between the State of Connecticut and the local EMD and MRC Unit Leader in assuring that the proper paperwork relating to the accident/injury is completed by the MRC member, as well as by the MRC Unit Leader or other officials as necessary.



PETER J. BOYNTON
COMMISSIONER



DATE