

Medical Reserve Corps

Massachusetts Fiscal Year 2011 Guidance for Acceptance and Expenditure of Medical Reserve Corps Funding (July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011)

Currently, there are 45 federally recognized Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) units in Massachusetts. For Fiscal Year 2011, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has allocated \$800,000 in emergency preparedness funding to support the operations of these MRC units. Approximately \$114,285 in MRC funding will be distributed to an identified host agency in each of the seven Public Health Emergency Preparedness Regions. This funding is designed to enhance local and regional public health preparedness by supporting community-level recruitment and management of pre-credentialed medical and non-medical volunteers through local or regional MRCs. The objective of this funding is to support and increase MRC coverage and services so that 100% of the cities and towns in each Region are served by an MRC unit.

This round of funding must be spent by June 30, 2011 in accordance with fiscal guidelines to be distributed by the DPH Emergency Preparedness Bureau (DPH/EPB).

MRC UNIT REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for public health emergency preparedness funding an MRC must:

- a) Be federally recognized by the U.S. Surgeon General's Office as of July 1, 2010;
- b) Meet the national MRC Core Competency Standards, found at www.medicalreservecorps.gov;
- c) Update its unit profile on the National website at least quarterly; and
- d) Notify DPH about the unit's intention to participate in the new volunteer management database, *MA Responds* no later than December 31, 2010.

Each MRC that receives funding under these Guidelines shall also:

- (1) Maintain a current list of the communities that the MRC covers, whether through formal or informal agreement. In the event that there are questions about MRC coverage, DPH/EPB will work with the Host Agency and affected MRCs to clarify coverage.
- (2) Agree to extend services to include to the extent possible all communities within a Region or regional coalition.

- (3) Coordinate outreach, recruiting, and training among all MRC units within the Region to maximize the number of communities covered and to minimize duplication of recruiting and services. If there is an unresolved situation or dispute, the host agency, coalition(s) and involved communities will work with DPH/EPB to meet and resolve the issue.
- (4) Designate a representative to attend all regular scheduled regional and state MRC meetings, and attend regional coalition meetings to promote sharing of ideas and to support local and regional public health efforts.
- (5) Collaborate with regional emergency preparedness coordinators, existing public health coalitions, regional hospital coordinators, hospitals, MSAR representatives, and other planning and response partners to:
 - a) Assist with coordination of activities and planning efforts;
 - b) Assure emergency volunteers are incorporated into local and regional public health response protocols and plans as appropriate; and
 - c) Develop a shared understanding of emergency volunteer activation and communication protocols, response roles, and capacity for response to ensure that volunteer resources are fully integrated.
- (6) Recruit, train, and retain members specifically to enhance public health preparedness activities related to Emergency Dispensing Site operations and public health programs and emergencies.
- (7) Establish protocols for performing CORI checks for all volunteers that are consistent with guidance to be provided by the MRC Statewide Coordination Steering Committee.
- (8) Assist with the development of standardized MRC protocols consistent with applicable federal and state guidelines that address activities including:
 - a) Trainings;
 - b) Badging;
 - c) Standard Operating Procedures;
 - d) CORI checks; and
 - e) Credentialing.
- (9) Submit to DPH/EPB through MRC contractor quarterly progress reports on a form provided by DPH.
- (10) Follow DPH standards and spending guidelines.
- (11) Provide to the Host Agency as requested detailed original receipts, budget requirements, spending forecasts, and any other needed information in a timely manner.

(12) Follow the “Communications Protocols for Coordination of Shelter Volunteer Requests” in the event of an emergency response that requires (a) mobilization of MRC units across regional jurisdictions, (b) the activation of the ESF-8 Desk at the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC); or (c) activation of the DPH EPB Department Operations Center (DOC).

Failure of an MRC unit to document compliance with these requirements and fiscal guidelines issued by DPH may necessitate repayment of funds received and/or result in ineligibility for future funds, provided that DPH shall provide 30 days advance written notice of noncompliance and reasonable time for the MRC unit to become compliant.

HOST AGENCY REQUIREMENTS

The Host Agency shall:

- (1) Convene and collaborate with an MRC Advisory Group consisting of one representative of each federally recognized MRC unit in that Region to develop the annual budget and work plan, and discuss the regional MRC project objectives and the criteria for distribution of funds in that Region.
- (2) Submit to DPH/EPB no later than September 15, 2010, a proposed budget and work plan developed with the MRC Advisory Group. The work plan shall (1) identify the recognized MRCs in the Region; (2) specify the geographic area to be addressed by the MRCs; and (3) provide brief project descriptions. The budget shall include a detailed distribution plan for the funding to the eligible MRCs within the Region.
- (3) Coordinate and convene regular meetings with MRCs in Region to assist with providing regional response to public health emergencies.
- (4) Assure accurate record keeping and compliance with grant requirements, and provide all required reports to DPH/EPB.
- (5) Assist with expanding outreach to communities not covered by an existing MRC.
- (6) Notify DPH/EPB of disagreements regarding MRC coverage or activities within the Region, and work with the Department to resolve disagreements.
- (7) Identify potential for regionalization of MRC activities and projects, and facilitate collaborative activities.
- (8) Facilitate bulk purchasing for all units.
- (9) Submit to DPH/EPB timely documentation and reports as required, and assure compliance with appropriate federal guidelines and DPH fiscal guidelines.

A Host Agency may receive not more than 15% of the regional award amount for administrative and fiscal support. For the purposes of these Guidelines, ***administrative and fiscal support*** is defined as those activities that are carried out by the Host Agency on behalf of MRC units, and include but are not limited to such activities as budget preparation, fiscal monitoring, distribution of funding, convening regular meetings of the MRC Advisory Group, development of monthly progress reports to DPH, and other activities carried out to directly support the activities of MRC units funded within the Region.

Failure of a Host Agency to document compliance with these requirements and fiscal guidelines issued by DPH may necessitate repayment of funds received and/or result in ineligibility for future funds, provided that DPH shall provide 30 days advance written notice of noncompliance and reasonable time for the host agency to become compliant.

MRC ADVISORY GROUPS

Each Region shall establish an MRC Advisory Group (Advisory Group) which shall consist of one representative from each federally recognized MRC in the Region and a representative of the regional coalition(s) governing body. The Advisory Group, with support from the host agency, will develop the budget and work plan for MRC funding in accordance with these Guidelines. The Work Plan and budget shall be shared with the Region. The Advisory Group shall be convened regularly by the host agency to discuss regional projects, review progress on Work Plan activities and budget expenditures, and identify and address issues or concerns about MRC activities in the Region.

Approximately \$114,285 will be distributed to each host agency to support MRC activities within the Region. The host agency will be responsible for distributing this MRC funding in accordance with a work plan and budget developed by the Region's MRC Advisory Group.

MRC STATEWIDE COORDINATION STEERING COMMITTEE

The Statewide MRC Advisory Committee (Committee) includes one representative from each Region's MRC Advisory Committee. The Committee, facilitated by the Director of the DPH Emergency Preparedness Bureau or her designee, shall meet at least quarterly to: discuss and address issues raised by MRCs and communities working with MRCs; develop policy recommendations on topics including but not limited to training, CORI requirements, and coordination with activities of the MA Responds volunteer management system (in development during FY 2011); advise DPH on logistical and administrative support activities to be provided by the contractor selected by DPH to work with the MRC program; and work to promote consistent recruitment, training, and activation protocols for MRCs across the Commonwealth. Each member of the Committee shall provide a regular report to his or her Region on the activities of the statewide MRC Coordination Steering Committee.

An MRC representative may serve on the Committee for up to two (2) grant cycles. Each Region's MRC Advisory Group shall identify a member from the Regional Advisory Committee to replace a departing Committee member.

Explanations of MRCs and their roles and areas covered can be found at www.mamedicalreservecorps.org and at www.medicalreservecorps.gov.