

## Narrative Notes for MRC Orientation Revised December 2016

1. **This presentation is the Oklahoma Medical Reserve Corps Orientation**
2. This portion of the presentation describes the **The History of the MRC & the Development of the OKMRC**
3. September 11, 2001 was a day that changed America. We acknowledged our vulnerability; we were able to imagine a myriad of events that could threaten our safety and overwhelm our medical emergency response system.

Additionally, the anthrax attacks of 2001 illustrated how quickly the medical response system could be overwhelmed. There were 7 identified envelopes of anthrax spores; there were 18 nonfatal infections and 5 deaths. But 30,000 employees were treated with antibiotics. We were easily able to envision the potential impact of a bioterrorist attack on the medical emergency response.

The question at that time was how could we identify and mobilize sufficient numbers of health care professionals to respond to an emergency?

4. In response to the events of 2001, the George W. Bush administration developed the concept of an organization that pre-identifies volunteers in order to prepare and respond to medical emergencies and public health initiatives. They launched a national, community-based movement in July 2002 and named this volunteer organization the Medical Reserve Corps.
5. The mission of the Medical Reserve Corps is to improve the health and safety of communities across the country by organizing and utilizing public health, medical and other volunteers.
6. The City of Tulsa was the first Oklahoma MRC grant recipient to receive funding directly from the Department of Health and Human Services. The following year, three additional Oklahoma MRC units received grant funding. Those grantees included the City of Oklahoma City, the City of Lawton and the Oklahoma Nurses Association. Originally, the four local MRC units operated under the umbrella of the Oklahoma State Citizen Corps Program. In 2005, the Oklahoma Medical Reserve Corps units joined to form the OKMRC under the Oklahoma State Department of Health.
7. In Oklahoma, the Medical Reserve Corps volunteer registry also serves as the state's ESAR-VHP. ESAR-VHP, a program of the Department of Health and Human Services, is intended to provide a structured framework for developing a database from which medical volunteers can be registered, credentialed, queried, and deployed. Oklahoma was one of the first states to integrate their MRC and ESAR-VHP programs. ESAR-VHP standards enable an enhanced national interstate and intrastate system for using and sharing medical professionals.

8. The OKMRC is a statewide system with one application, orientation, database and website, developed to ensure collaboration and assist in the growth and development of unified and consistent local public health and medical volunteer programs across the State.
9. The vision of the OKMRC is to enhance emergency preparedness and response capabilities by supplementing existing response infrastructures in local communities across the state of Oklahoma.
10. The Medical Reserve Corps mission is to engage volunteers to strengthen public health, emergency response, and community resiliency.
11. For each county MRC unit the first priority is to meet the needs of that county. In the event there is not a local need, then volunteers may be asked if they would assist in another community. If there were a disaster in another state, volunteers may be asked to participate in a federal deployment.
12. Oklahoma has many established MRC County Units. In 2016, there were 36 nationally recognized MRC Units.
13. In addition to county units, the OKMRC has several specialty units. Stress Response Team, State Animal Response Team, Oklahoma MRC Nurses, and Choctaw Nation MRC. If you are a member of Choctaw nation or interested in participating in a mental health or animal response you can note your interest in the Skills section of your OKMRC profile. Registered nurses will automatically be included in the Oklahoma MRC Nurses.
14. The next section of this presentation will describe the **OKMRC Program Policies**.
15. The OKMRC is committed to respecting the privacy of volunteers and protecting the confidentiality of personal information. Confidential information obtained by the OKMRC will not be used for furthering any private interest, or as a means of personal gain. Anyone with access to volunteer information will take proper precautions for preventing unintentional disclosure of confidential information. Information gained through the OKMRC database, deployment records, privileged communications, volunteer applications, or other avenues is considered confidential and disclosure by staff can result in civil or criminal penalties.
16. The OKMRC extends equal opportunity to individuals who meet the membership requirements and complete the OKMRC orientation, and agree to adhere to the guidelines established in the Volunteer Handbook, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, or disability.

17. Criminal history investigations will be conducted upon application, and every 5 years thereafter. Volunteers are required to notify the OKMRC program office of any change in criminal history. The OKMRC reserves the right to examine a volunteer's background and criminal history at any time.

18. Licensed medical professionals volunteering in a medical capacity must supply the OKMRC with all of the following information:

License numbers and expiration dates  
Name of the institution issuing the medical degree or credential  
Date of graduation  
Employment history

19. Another benefit of the OMRC is the provision of liability protection. In May of 2004 our state legislature enacted the "Volunteer Medical Professional Services Immunity Act". Within this bill Section 34 G states, "Any person participating in a Medical Reserve Corps and assisting with emergency management, emergency operations, or hazard mitigation in response to any emergency, man-made disaster, or natural disaster, or participating in public health initiatives endorsed by a city, county, or state health department in the State of Oklahoma, shall not be liable for civil damages on the basis of any act or omission, ...."

Additionally, House Bill 1678 in 2009 expanded the scope of liability coverage to OKMRC volunteers.

20. Volunteers are not protected by Oklahoma Workers' Compensation laws

21. All approved OKMRC volunteers will receive a statewide identification badge with a specified expiration date. Before a new badge is issued, the OKMRC will conduct a new background check and credential verification. Contact your local unit coordinator or the county health department for details.

22. During deployment, OKMRC badges are to be worn clearly visible on the upper torso. Should you leave the OKMRC, for example by moving out of state, please return the ID badge to the program office.

23. The OKMRC provides volunteers with a statewide identification badge, lanyard, and shirt or vest identifying them as a verified member of the OKMRC. Volunteers should present their OKMRC badge and wear their OKMRC response shirt when responding on behalf of the program.

24. The OKMRC values and appreciates the time and expertise of its volunteers.

25. This portion of the Orientation covers **Volunteer Responsibilities**

26. Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the accuracy of their personal profile. Updating contact information, licensure, and certifications is critical to maintaining a volunteer response. In addition, the OKMRC has a quarterly call down to test our ability to reach volunteers. You are responsible for responding to the call down.
27. Each volunteer decides their level of engagement. However, volunteers are expected to participate in drills, exercises and trainings in order to stay current in their response role.
28. Participation requirements include contacting your Unit Coordinator to meet him or her and scheduling a time to have your ID badge made. Many trainings are available to OKMRC volunteers. There are 4 required trainings to be completed in your first year. The required trainings are online and available on the OKMRC website. This Orientation is one of the 4 required trainings. Completion of training may determine eligibility for deployment.
29. Members of the OKMRC represent the OKMRC program, their local health department, and the Oklahoma State Department of Health. Volunteers should conduct themselves in a professional manner.
30. All OKMRC volunteers are required to abide by the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996, regardless of their volunteer role within the organization.
31. It is critical for MRC volunteers to develop their family's emergency preparedness plan and kit. One of the four required courses for OKMRC volunteers is entitled Family First: Developing a Family Emergency Plan and is available on the OKMRC website.
32. Do NOT self-deploy. It is essential to your safety and the integrity of the program that volunteers are activated through the appropriate channels and go through staging before responding. Volunteers who self-deploy are not provided liability coverage; and they may actually jeopardize the response effort or themselves if proper staging procedures are not followed.
33. **Scene Safety**

The following safety instructions are appropriate for most OKMRC Deployments:

Be prepared to show your OKMRC badge and a copy of your medical license if you have one

Report to designated locations and follow the instructions of the Incident Command System team leader and Safety Officer

Wear Personal Protective Equipment as directed

34. Completing the training *Psychological First Aid* provides volunteers a better understanding of the impact of an event on the behavioral health of the MRC member and their family, team, and community.
35. The next portion of this presentation will describe the **Fit for Duty Guidelines**.
36. The Oklahoma Medical Reserve Corps position descriptions include a fitness category. Volunteers are asked to evaluate their ability to perform tasks in the following categories:
  - Arduous physical fitness
  - Moderate physical fitness
  - Light physical fitness
37. **Emotional Fitness** - OKMRC volunteers may witness disturbing or traumatic events, experience difficult situations, and/or austere conditions. The OKMRC Stress Response Team (SRT) may evaluate volunteers' emotional fitness prior to deployment. The recommendation of the SRT will be final.
38. **Financial Fitness** - OKMRC volunteers are not compensated for their time or travel expenses. The OKMRC will not ask volunteers to disclose financial information, but encourages volunteers to consider the effect of long term deployment on their family's financial status.
39. Our primary means of communication is posting information on our website and e-mail. Our mass notification phone system allows a pre-recorded voice message and text message to be sent to our volunteers. Additionally, we are active on social media, through Facebook and Twitter.
40. Each quarter the OKMRC conducts a member Call-Down and you will receive a notification either by email or by telephone. Please follow the instructions and respond as directed. It is essential that you keep your information current in the OKMRC database in order to receive our communications.
41. **The next portion shows a few of the OKMRC Volunteer Activities**
42. The OKMRC provides support for incident response by augmenting medical and public health personnel when local resources are overwhelmed or exhausted. Activation of the OKMRC is driven by a public health or medical response and will depend upon the size, scope, and nature of an incident. Local response remains a priority for local units and response needs are determined at the local level.
43. The OKMRC has supported Medical Responses

44. The OKMRC also has an active Mental Health response team.
45. The OKMRC has a growing Animal response team.
46. The OKMRC will augment existing agencies to help staff a Mass Immunization/ Prophylaxis Strategy (MIPS) clinic. The purpose of this clinic is to provide preventive medication to a large population in a short amount of time.
47. OKMRC volunteers participate in many different community non-emergency activities.
- 48. The final portion of this presentation is on Training. The OKMRC Training Curriculum is available on the OKMRC website.**
49. The OKMRC is transitioning from the previous four tier training curriculum to incorporate the current MRC Volunteer Core Competencies, based on the Core Competencies for Disaster Medicine and Public Health. The Competencies for Disaster Medicine and Public Health (DMPH) are widely understood to be the knowledge needed for a health care professional and/or first responder to perform a task in a safe and consistent manner. Utilizing the DMPH Competencies as the baseline core competency set for MRC volunteers makes collaboration between MRC units and other partner organizations more efficient.
50. The MRC Volunteer Core Competencies are organized into four Learning Paths: Volunteer Preparedness, Volunteer Response, Volunteer Leadership & Volunteer Support for Community Resiliency.
51. The OKMRC has 4 required trainings. OKMRC Orientation, which you are listening to now, is required prior to processing your application. The other three required courses are to be completed within the first year of joining the OKMRC. These courses are Family First: Developing a Family Preparedness Plan and two FEMA courses, ICS 100B and NIMS 700a. All required courses are available in the Online Training portion of the OKMRC Website.
52. In addition to the four required courses, the following courses are recommended for OKMRC volunteers:
  - Psychological First Aid
  - CPR/AED/First Aid
  - FEMA IS 200.b ICS for Single Resources (online)
  - CERT – Community Emergency Rescue Team
53. The reason FEMA IS 100a & IS-700a are required is that understanding the National Incident Management System (NIMS) is a critical component of emergency response. NIMS is an integrated system that establishes a uniform set of processes, protocols, and procedures that all emergency responders, at every

level of government, will use to conduct response actions. The OKMRC has adopted the NIMS guidelines, and responses will be managed under the organizational structure set forth in ICS protocols.

**54. ICS divides emergency response into 5 functions**

- Command
- Operations
- Planning
- Logistics
- Finance & Administration

**55. There are several ways the uniform set of processes, protocols, and procedures that all emergency responders use will apply to you: For example,**

Sign in and out of the scene (ICS 211)

Report to only one person

Stay within assigned role

All media requests must be coordinated through the designated Public Information Officer (PIO). OKMRC volunteers do not speak to the media

Accurately document all response activity on an Activity Log (ICS 214)

**56. Training profiles are maintained within OKMRC website. Trainings completed with the OKMRC will be verified and displayed within the training profile. Additional trainings, they may be uploaded to their profile via the Upload Tool. Training notebooks are available for volunteers to maintain a folder of completed trainings and certificates.**

**57. The OKMRC offers several types of Volunteer Leadership roles. Volunteer Leadership requires the completion of specific training. Some deployments will require the completion of response specific training.**

**58. Other deployments will offer Just-in –time training which is streamlined on-scene training generally offered to volunteers just prior to deployment. It is job specific, and conducted to train personnel to immediately perform and function within a response. Should a volunteer assignment require training specific to the requesting agency, the requesting agency is required to provide volunteers with such training.**

**59. Many types of training opportunities are available for our volunteers. Online trainings are available in the Training portion of the OKMRC Website. Classroom training opportunities are posted on the website Events Calendar. Classroom trainings may be sponsored by the OKMRC or sponsored by a partner organization and OKMRC volunteers are invited to join.**

- 60.** To find out more about OKMRC training opportunities please check your e-mail and the OKMRC events calendar. Events taking place within the next 30 days are visible on the home page.
- 61.** To view events in future months, open the calendar. You can change the month with a drop down menu and see upcoming events.
- 62.** A copy of the Volunteer Handbook is available on the OKMRC website. The Volunteer Handbook includes information found in the OKMRC Orientation and more!
- 63.** Thank you for volunteering with the OKMRC! For more information, explore the OKMRC website, search for our Facebook page (OKMRC) and follow us on Twitter.