

Eastern Oregon Regional Medical Reserve Corps

Volunteer Handbook



Eastern Oregon Regional Medical Reserve Corp
Managed by or through Baker County Emergency Management

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ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

Welcome and thank you for joining the Eastern Oregon Regional Medical Reserve Corps (EORMRC)

This handbook was created to give you pertinent information for your volunteer experience. The volunteer guidebook covers what you need to know about mission operations, training, confidentiality, liability and determining what level of volunteer you want to train to respond as. Please take time to read through it and keep it as a reference should questions arise in the future.

- **Please complete Appendix A at the end of this document and return it to the EORMRC Coordinator.**

Always feel free to contact your MRC Coordinator for additional information or to share suggestions or comments to Jason Yencopal, Baker Emergency Manager (541) 523-9669, jyencopal@bakercounty.org

For information about the MRC program as a whole, please visit phe.gov/mrc/Pages/default.aspx

BACKGROUND

The Office of the Surgeon General (OSG) announced the formation of the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) program in early 2002, as a response to the need for pre-identified, pre-credentialed and pre-trained health professionals to act as surge capacity for emergency responders in disaster situations. This need for a centralized registry of trained health volunteers was highlighted during the Sept. 11, 2001 disaster response, when health professionals wanted to volunteer but there was no system in place to verify their credentials. Since its start, the MRC has expanded to over 900 units across the country.

The mission of the MRC is to engage volunteers to strengthen public health, emergency response, and community resiliency. MRC units are community-based and function as a way to locally organize volunteers who want to donate their time and expertise to prepare for and respond to emergencies and promote healthy living throughout the year. MRC volunteers supplement existing emergency and public health resources. Volunteers include medical and public health professionals such as physicians, nurses, pharmacists, dentists, veterinarians, and epidemiologists, as well as other community members; such as interpreters, chaplains, office workers, and students; in key support positions. The overarching goal of the MRC, as dictated by the US Surgeon General, is for units to strengthen public health infrastructure in their communities by improving health literacy, preventing disease, eliminating health disparities, and improving public health preparedness.

The Eastern Oregon Regional MRC established a medical support unit in 2017 for seven counties in Eastern Oregon. Volunteers support missions for the 2020 Umatilla flood events, staffing medical tents for the Solar Eclipse, county fairs and rodeos, including the Pendleton Round Up. MRC volunteers assisted with the COVID-19 drive through testing clinic in Union county and enhancing medical support to the Baker County Public Health Department.

MRC volunteers can also choose to support communities in need nationwide. When the southeast was battered by hurricanes in 2004, MRC volunteers helped communities rebuild by filling in at local hospitals, assisting at local shelters, and providing first aid to those injured in the storms. During this 2-month period, more than 30 MRC units worked as part of the relief efforts, including some whose volunteers were called in from across the country to assist the American Red Cross (ARC) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

UNIT DESCRIPTION

Mission

The unit's mission is to improve community resiliency by identifying and training professional and nonprofessional medical volunteers to integrate seamlessly with emergency personnel in the event of a disaster, and to fill gaps in community health services in non-disaster situations. Volunteers help bolster the number of emergency staffing for other counties in Oregon when they request assistance.

The Eastern Oregon Regional Medical Reserve Corp is administered by Baker County Emergency Management. As a regional reserve, the Corp covers ten counties: Baker, Gilliam, Grant, Lake, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa. The unit provides surge capacity to emergency personnel responding to a local disaster including hospital support, point of dispensing (POD) or alternate care site staffing, behavioral health triage, assisting mass prophylaxis/vaccination clinics and other major medical/public health needs.

The unit is partnered with the emergency management and public health departments in each county. These partnerships are maintained in large part through Healthcare Preparedness Program (HPP) Region 6 and 9, and allow a coordinated community-wide response to a disaster.

The Eastern Oregon Regional MRC is open to everyone who wishes to join. Licensed medical professionals register with the state SERV-OR registry, through which their credentials are verified. Volunteers without medical licenses, such as nursing students or retired health professionals with expired licenses, register directly with the MRC Unit Coordinator. Background checks are conducted through the Oregon State Police Criminal Justice Information Services.

Currently, the EOR MRC has one equipped response trailer (a second trailer is planned for 2020-21) to help support MRC missions. The response trailer contains emergency medical response supplies, refrigerator and ice chests, communication equipment including satellite internet access, personal protective equipment, emergency food and water, power generators, portable heaters, tents, medical cots, and more.



BASIC VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

To be considered an active member of the Eastern Oregon Regional MRC, volunteers must complete these basic requirements:

1. **Begin by registering with the State Emergency Registry of Volunteers (SERV-OR).** SERV-OR will conduct a credential verification for licensed health professionals. A background check will also be required for all volunteers. The EOR MRC coordinator will provide a background check form for non-medical volunteers.
 - Register at: [serv-or.org](https://www.serv-or.org) and be sure to choose Eastern Oregon Regional MRC when prompted to “Add Organization”.
2. **Complete FEMA Incident Command System (ICS) and National Incident Management System (NIMS) training.** ICS is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazards incident management approach that allows for the integration of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure. It enables a coordinated response among various jurisdictions and functional agencies, both public and private, as well as establishing common processes for planning and managing resources.
 - In-classroom training will be offered periodically, usually taking about 4 hours.
 - The courses can also be completed online at:
www.training.fema.gov/IS/NIMS.asp
 1. IS-100.b-(ICS 100) Introduction to Incident Command System
 2. IS-700.a National Incident Management System (NIMS), an Introduction

Please forward certificates of completion to the MRC Coordinator to keep on file.

3. **MRC Orientation and Training.** Volunteer orientation sessions will be remote or online in 2020-2021 due COVID-19 social distancing restrictions, to familiarize new volunteers with the MRC Core Competencies (listed below). Core competency training is designed to provide MRC volunteers with the tools to protect their physical and emotional well-being during emergency response, as well as to integrate with community response partners.

The Competency courses are available on the MRC Train site MRC TRAIN and is a gateway into the [TRAIN Learning Network](#), the most comprehensive catalog of public health training opportunities. The Volunteer Tier Level Structure is divided into 4 levels. One of the goals of the EOR MRC is to help volunteers reach their desired levels with the MRC.

MRC Volunteer Levels:

Level 4	New volunteers with no participation or training in emergency or non-emergency events
Level 3	Volunteer Preparedness - New volunteers with limited training or MRC participation in emergency and non-emergency events and exercises
Level 2	Volunteer Response – Volunteers with demonstrated participation in emergency and non-emergency events and exercises local or state
Level 1	Volunteer Leadership & Community Resilience – Volunteers with demonstrated participation with in emergency and non-emergency events and capable of serving in supervisory roles

The Competency courses are available on the MRC Train site MRC TRAIN is a gateway into the [TRAIN Learning Network](#), the most comprehensive catalog of public health training opportunities.

Oregon Tort Claims Act: Liability

Liability coverage is available to volunteers to the extent authorized by the Oregon Tort Claims Act. The Oregon Tort Claims Act entitles volunteers to defense and indemnity against any tort claim or demand, whether groundless or otherwise, arising out of an alleged act or omission occurring in the performance of duty. However, these provisions do not apply if these acts did not occur in the course and scope of official duties, in cases of malfeasance or willful or wanton neglect of duty, or failure to cooperate fully with the County and staff in defense of a complaint or if you otherwise prejudice the defense of the case.

Federal Volunteer Protection Act, 42 U.S.C. § 14501 et seq.

Provides immunity from liability for negligence for people who volunteer for a government entity or non-profit organization. The volunteer is not liable to the person they harm, but the organization that the volunteer is working for may still sue the volunteer personally for negligence. Volunteers must be properly licensed, certified, or authorized, and must act within the scope of his/her authority within the organization. Negligence arising from operation of a motorized vehicle is not covered. Protection extends only to unpaid volunteers.

Oregon State Governor Declared Emergency

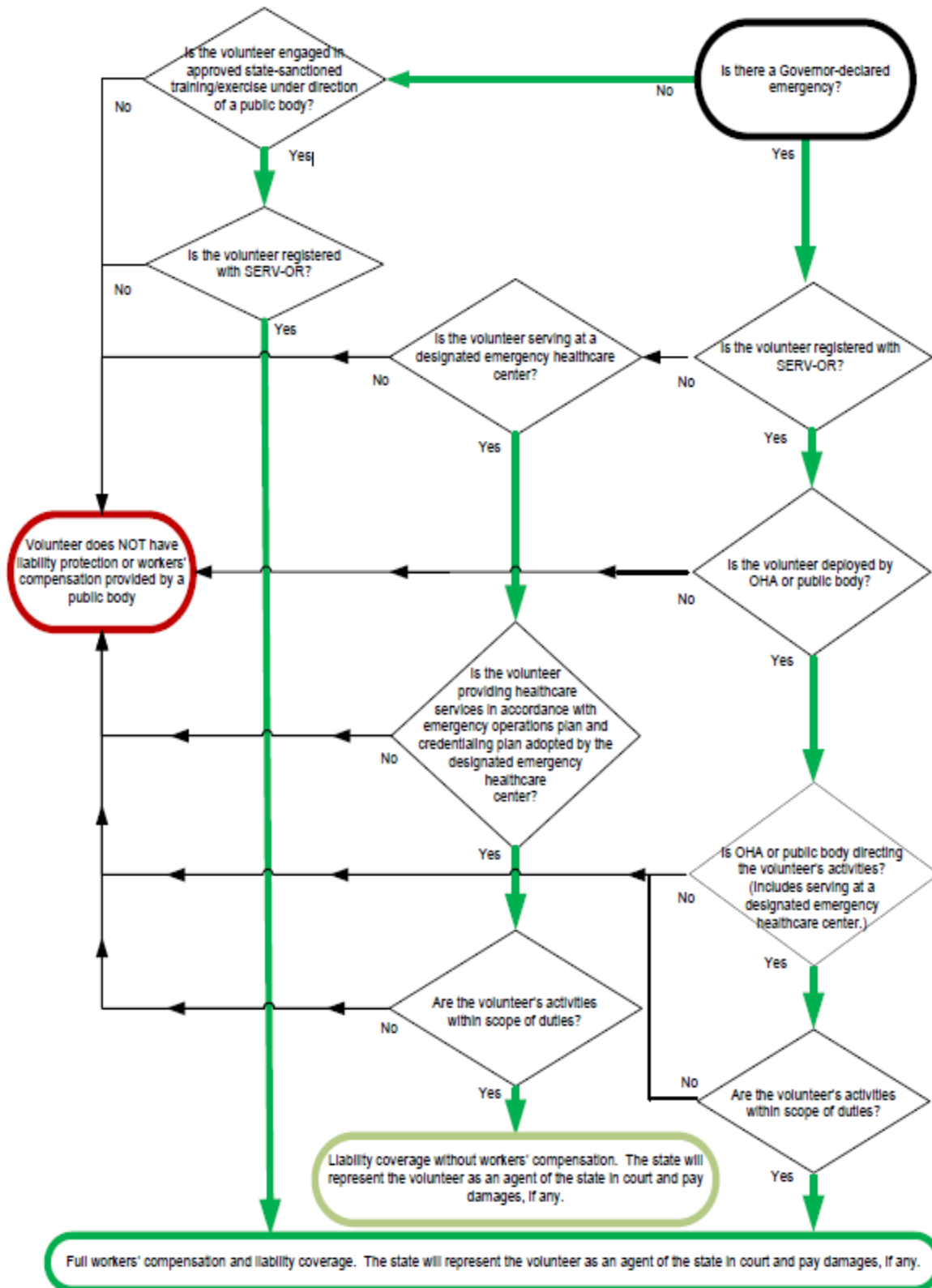
In the event of a Governor-declared emergency, volunteers may be entitled to full workers' compensation and liability coverage through the State. Please note that to be eligible the volunteer must accept no compensation for his/her work and must be working under the direction of the incident management team.

"When you respond to a Governor-declared emergency or state-authorized training, there are liability protections under the law for purposes of any claim that might be made against you. You may also be entitled to benefits if you are injured while responding. Many counties and other local jurisdictions use the same approach to covering health care volunteers in local emergencies. You should check with the local jurisdiction to determine liability coverage for a local event."¹

ORS 401.651 to 401.670 authorizes the Oregon DHS to establish a registry of emergency health care workers who could be called on to assist when activated following a declaration by the Governor and when acting in the manner established by the law. These volunteers are considered "agents" of the State for liability and injury protection purposes under the Oregon Tort Claims Act (OTCA).

¹ Operations Manual for the State Emergency registry of Volunteers in Oregon (SERV-OR) Volunteer Liability Protection Statement 10.1, page 20

Flowchart Summary of Liability Coverage for Volunteer Health Care Professionals in SERV-OR ²



² Operations Manual for the State Emergency registry of Volunteers in Oregon (SERV-OR)

Liability Cap for Donated Services

Certified clinical nurse specialists, licensed physicians, physician assistants, nurses, nurse practitioners, dentists and dental hygienists may register with their respective licensing boards for Limitation on Liability for Donated Services, if interested. House Bill 2554, passed by the 1999 Legislature limits the liability of certain health professionals (listed above) for injury, death, or other loss that may arise from services they provide without compensation. These health professionals are liable only when such loss results from gross negligence on their part, provided they have met the following conditions:

1. The health professional is registered with their respective Oregon licensing board as a provider of healthcare services without compensation and who wishes to claim the liability limitation provided by HB 2554.
2. The patient, or a person who has authority under law to make decisions for the patient, signs a statement notifying the patient that the health care services are provided without compensation and that the practitioner is liable only to the extent provided by the new law. This statement must be signed prior to receiving the services.
3. The practitioner receives the informed consent of the patient or the person who has authority under law to make decisions for the patient prior to providing the health care services.
4. The practitioner provides health care services without compensation, except for reimbursement for laboratory fees, testing services, and other out-of-pocket expenses.

There is no charge for registration in this program, but registration must be renewed annually. To keep expenses down, licensing boards do not send renewal notices. Participating health professionals are responsible for updating their own registration each year.

Registration forms are available:

- A. For physicians or physician assistants on the Oregon Medical Board website at oregon.gov/omb/OMBForms1/all-liability-limitation.pdf
- B. For nurses, nurse practitioners, or clinical nurse specialists on the [Oregon State Board of Nursing website](#)
- C. For dentists or dental hygienists on the [Oregon Board of Dentistry website](#)

Workers' Compensation

Except in the case of a Governor-declared emergency, there is currently no workers' compensation available to MRC volunteers.

POLICIES

Verification of Licensure

All Eastern Oregon Regional MRC volunteers are responsible for keeping their respective licenses and certifications current. Volunteers should notify the MRC Coordinator of any changes to their licensure/certification. Licenses and certifications will be regularly verified to ensure active status and good standing.

Non-medical volunteers need to pass a criminal background check. The MRC Coordinator will provide the permission form and the background check will be conducted by the Oregon Criminal Justice Department

Contact Information

In order to ensure that volunteers can be reached promptly during an emergency, Eastern Oregon Regional MRC volunteers are responsible for keeping their contact information updated. Any changes to name, phone number, email address, or mailing address should be immediately updated on SERV-OR and brought to the attention of the MRC Coordinator.

Deployment Tracking

The MRC Coordinator tracks all volunteer activities to demonstrate the valuable contribution to community resiliency made by MRC members. To facilitate better documentation of these contributions, volunteers must report to the coordinator after participating in an MRC related event (including emergency response, exercises, volunteer activities, etc.) the following:

1. Event name and date
2. Hours Worked – start and end time
3. Assigned position (ex. medical screener, patient intake, etc.)
4. Tasks (briefly describe the type of tasks you performed)
5. Travel – if traveling to a mission please record your round trip mileage (a Baker County travel reimbursement form will be provided for you to complete)

The above information may be submitted to the MRC Coordinator via email, over the phone, or by mail.

Family and Work Obligations

All Eastern Oregon Regional MRC members should fulfill their emergency response obligations to their employers prior to responding as an MRC volunteer. In addition, volunteers should always make sure that their families are safe and taken care of before deploying with the MRC. Completing a personal and family preparedness plan is part of the Level 3 core competency. MRC TRAIN has helpful aid, Personal and Family Preparedness ([MRC-TRAIN 1081145](#)) it takes approximately 25 minutes to complete.

Deployment with Eastern Oregon MRC is noncompulsory. Training will be provided on how volunteers will be notified of an emergency and non-emergency event. It is the choice of each volunteer whether or not to respond to a request for deployment.

VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

Members will:

1. Provide quality care to individuals without regard to race, sex, religion, nation of origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability.
2. Be receptive to training that will make them more aware of the social and physical needs of the persons being served and other training appropriate for our mission.
3. Support and supplement the work of other volunteers.
4. Respect **confidentiality** of all information pertaining to the work site in which they volunteer or pertaining to recipients of service.
5. Properly complete records and reports.
6. Follow directions given by the team lead or MRC Coordinator.

Discipline and Separation

Volunteering with Eastern Oregon Regional MRC is a serious responsibility. The Eastern Oregon MRC recognizes that giving up one's time to volunteer, particularly during an emergency, is a generous contribution to your community. The unit values every volunteer's contribution and will strive to meet all volunteer needs to the greatest extent possible. However, if the rights and responsibilities outlined in this manual are not respected, it may be necessary for disciplinary actions to take place. All complaints will be reviewed by the MRC Coordinator, who will take corrective action. Depending upon the seriousness of the offense, a volunteer may be placed on probation or asked for separation.

The following is a non-comprehensive list of examples of offenses that would warrant automatic dismissal if perpetrated while an individual is a deployed MRC representative.

1. Criminal Acts
2. Insubordination
3. Negligence
4. Theft
5. Destruction of property
6. Slander
7. Under the influence of alcohol or drugs

Dress Code

While there are no required uniforms for Eastern Oregon Regional MRC members, it is advised that volunteers wear appropriate clothing during emergency response. Recommended attire includes a jacket, T-shirt/shirt, pants, socks, comfortable closed-toe shoes, **identification** (driver's license, ID badge, etc.), and a watch. The wearing of jewelry and perfume is highly discouraged.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

Incident Command System

The Eastern Oregon Regional MRC operates under the Incident Command System (ICS). The use of this system allows the unit to readily integrate into the existing emergency response system and communicate/coordinate with disaster response partners.

Activation Procedures

1. The deployment chain of command is as follows:
 - a. The County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), in collaboration with Region 9 Healthcare Coalition and the MRC Coordinator, will make the decision to activate MRC volunteers.
 - b. Once the decision has been made to activate MRC members, the MRC Coordinator or other designated personnel will send out the request for mobilization. Depending on the skills needed, only volunteers with specific skills/training may be activated.
2. Three different communication procedures will be used singly or in combination to mobilize the unit:
 - a. Group email messages
 - b. Text messages and or phone call
 - c. Emergency notification app such as Alert Sense
3. It may at times be necessary that only elements of the Eastern Oregon Regional MRC are deployed- such as volunteers with specialized skills- rather than the entire unit.
4. In emergency medical operations, Eastern Oregon Regional MRC personnel may be deployed to an emergency scene in the field, to a hospital or other healthcare facility, to an alternate care site, or to any other location where their services are needed. These deployments are at the discretion of the Incident Commander.
5. Once on scene, volunteers will check in with the appropriate officials (usually at a staging area) and unit personnel will be integrated into the response effort at the discretion of the Incident Commander.
6. Included in the deployment request will be specific information regarding expected volunteer roles, situation description, where and when to report, staffing needs, and shift assignments.
7. All MRC volunteers have the right to decline deployment and are urged to care for their families and work obligations prior to deployment.

Personal Protective Equipment

When necessary, Eastern Oregon Regional MRC volunteers will be issued and trained on the use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) upon deployment.

Event Information and Briefing

When the Eastern Oregon Regional MRC is activated, all deployed volunteers will receive a current Incident Action report and an on-scene incident command briefing to ensure they are prepared to respond to the specific event. This will include a Job Action Sheet outlining their role and responsibilities.

Potential Volunteer Roles

Consistent with local and state plans and protocols, MRC members may assist county public health, public safety-first responders, local hospitals, Region 9 Healthcare Coalition, State of Oregon Health Division, or other disaster response partners in emergency operations for which they are properly licensed, trained and equipped, including but not limited to:

- Emergency medical support with local public safety, public health, and local hospitals in response to mass casualty disaster, natural and manmade.
- Mass immunization or prophylaxis operations such as vaccine administration, patient education, patient screening, maintaining medical records, or activities in support of direct medical operations.
- During non-disaster situations, MRC members may choose to volunteer within the community in activities such as vaccination clinics, communicable disease outbreak investigations, County-wide emergency response exercises, public awareness campaigns, public health education campaigns, MRC recruitment tables, and emergency preparedness education.
- Deployment of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) including reformulation and breakdown of bulk packages to smaller, patient-specific prescriptions, consistent with regional bioterrorism response plans.
- Staffing quarantine or isolation facilities.
- Response to food or waterborne disease outbreaks.
- Behavioral health triage.

Demobilization Procedures

The requesting entity and the volunteer manager will consider responder safety, ongoing response operations (cycling new volunteers into response), risk management and mitigation procedures, and documentation required by entities overseeing disaster response and recovery operations.

1. MRC personnel will demobilize along with other on-scene personnel and resources, in according with the Incident Action Plan and/or the Incident Commander's instructions.
2. MRC personnel will support emergency medical/public health operations for the duration of an incident or so long as their assistance is required. It is possible that some unit personnel and resources are demobilized before others as their assignments are completed.
3. Once demobilized inform the EOR MRC Coordinator of the demobilization, so the coordinator can confirm you are safe.
4. The onsite volunteer manager or MRC Coordinator will conduct a debriefing with responders demobilizing. The briefing will provide an opportunity for the volunteer to critique all aspects of participation (what went well or needs improvement, the response, evaluation of equipment/supplies, and other responders' performance and behavior).

MRC-TRAIN

train.org/main/home

MRC TRAIN is a gateway into the [TRAIN Learning Network](#), the most comprehensive catalog of public health training opportunities. TRAIN is a free service for learners from the Public Health Foundation.

Through MRC TRAIN, you can:

- Quickly find and register for emergency preparedness, response, and public health courses
- Access valuable materials, course reviews, and discussions to improve your learning experience
- Develop your personal MRC training plans, manage your progress, and track completion with online transcripts
- Stay informed of the latest public health trainings for your area or expertise

If this is your first visit, click "Create an Account" on the left menu to register for TRAIN and start learning today!

If you already have an account, please enter your Login Name and Password in the text boxes provided on the left menu and click "Login."

APPENDIX A

Confidentiality

Due to the nature of services that the Eastern Oregon Regional Medical Reserve Corps provides, you may process information that is confidential and not public record. For that reason you are asked to sign a confidentiality statement indicating that you will keep information to which you have access confidential and not discuss it with anyone other than the staff person with whom you are working.

Confidentiality Pledge

I, _____, certify that I have read the statement below and agree to comply with the terms. I realize that, as an MRC volunteer with Eastern Oregon Regional Medical Reserve Corps, I may acquire knowledge of confidential information from files, case records, missions, conversations, etc. I agree that such information is not to be discussed or revealed to anyone not authorized to have this information.

Signature

Date

Photography Consent

Eastern Oregon Regional Medical Reserve Corps may take photographs of volunteers in action during training, exercises, and actual events. In addition, each volunteer is photographed for identification purposes. Photographs may be used on the website, in newsletters, and other publications.

Please check your response and sign where indicated:

- ☐ I give Eastern Oregon Regional MRC permission to use my photo as stated above
- ☐ I do not give Eastern Oregon Regional MRC permission to use my photo.

Signature

Date

Receipt of Handbook

I have received a copy of the Eastern Oregon Regional Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer Handbook. I have read and understood the policies and information in it and agree to abide by these policies during my volunteer term. I am aware that failure to adhere to the policies, procedures, and code of conduct detailed in this handbook may result in disciplinary action.

Signature

Date