

MRC Core Competencies

Developing Volunteer Capabilities and Baseline Training Standards

Providing a solid training foundation is essential in building volunteer capabilities and ensuring they are ready for potential deployments. The MRC Core Competencies serve as the national training standard for MRC volunteers and provide a **“common language”** to communicate volunteer capabilities with other MRC units and partner organizations.

In addition, NACCHO has developed two eLearning modules for MRC volunteers to provide them with resources and tools to outline steps they can take to prepare for deployments and identify what to expect during and after a deployment.

MRC Core Competencies Overview

The MRC Core Competencies were originally developed in 2006 to provide a set of skills and knowledge for MRC volunteers to be able to perform their volunteer responsibilities. In 2014, the MRC Core Competencies were updated to align with the **11 Core Competencies for Disaster Medicine and Public Health (DMPH) Competencies**, which serve as the core competencies for public health professionals.

These competencies represent a **baseline level of knowledge and skills that all MRC volunteers should have**, regardless of their role within the MRC unit. Each competency should be understood at a basic level, with the recognition that more information and skill can be gained in each competency with additional training and experience.

The competencies are aligned into **four MRC Learning Paths**: Volunteer Preparedness, Volunteer Response, Volunteer Leadership, and Volunteer Support for Community Resiliency.

MRC Volunteer Core Competencies

LEARNING PATHS

Preparedness

- Personal & Family
- Safe Behaviors

Response

- Volunteer Roles
- Communicate Effectively
- Surge Capacity Responses
- Clinical Management

Leadership

- Situational Awareness
- Public Health for All Populations

Community Resilience

- Ethical Principles
- Legal Principles
- Recovery Considerations

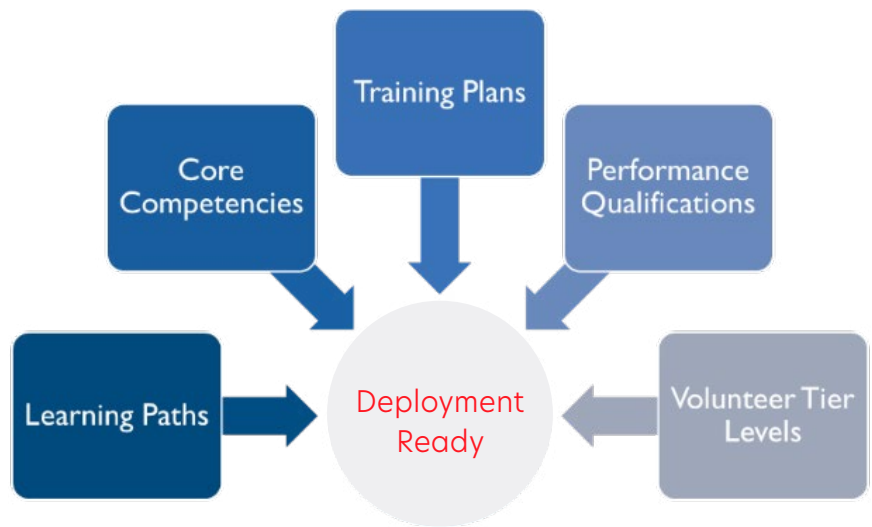
An [MRC Core Competencies Training Plan](#) is available for MRC unit leaders and volunteers to assist them in meeting the training requirements of the competencies. This training plan provides courses that are available through the MRC TRAIN platform and provides flexibility for MRC volunteers to take courses at their own pace. MRC units may also provide in-person courses or develop their own training plan to meet the competencies.

The **MRC performance qualifications translate the core competencies into measurable actions** that are relevant to the work of MRC volunteers.

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Like the core competencies, each of these performance qualifications can be met at a basic or advanced level.

MRC volunteers will have **varying levels of training, experience, and ability to deploy**. The 2021 MRC Core Competencies Training Plan includes recommendations for each of the DMPH Competencies by volunteer tier level. Using the recommended tier levels will help the MRC unit leader identify core competency training priorities based on local response needs. It also provides a structure for volunteers seeking additional training or levels of responsibility.



MRC Volunteer Deployment Readiness eLearnings

NACCHO, with input from the contributors of the Deployment Ready Project, has developed two eLearning courses for MRC volunteers to prepare them for the different phases of deployments.

The **Pre-Deployment training** provides volunteers with an understanding of the phases of deployment, terms and acronyms used, personal and family preparedness, recommended training, and other activities they can take to be prepared in advance for potential emergency and non-emergency responses.

The **Deployment and Post-Deployment training** provides volunteers with understanding of the types of activities they can expect during and after a deployment. It also provides information on health and safety factors, equipment, supplies, training, and administrative and operational activities.

The MRC Volunteer Deployment Readiness eLearning courses are available on:

MRC TRAIN (www.mrc.train.org)

- MRC Volunteer Deployment Readiness: [Pre-Deployment Phase 1086867](#)
- MRC Volunteer Deployment Readiness: [Deployment and Post-Deployment Phases 1086868](#)

NACCHO University (<https://www.pathlms.com/naccho>)

- Both courses can be found in the [Public Health Preparedness tab - Medical Reserve Corps](#).

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MRC Core Competencies by Learning Path

Organized into four Learning Paths, the DMPH Competencies represent a baseline level of knowledge and skills that all MRC volunteers should have, regardless of their role within the MRC unit. Because the DMPH Competencies establish only a minimum standard, units may choose to expand on the competencies in order to train volunteers at a more advanced level.

MRC Core Competencies Learning Paths

Preparedness

- Demonstrate personal and family preparedness for disasters and public health emergencies. 1.0
- Demonstrate knowledge of personal safety measures that can be implemented in a disaster or public health emergency. 5.0

Response

- Demonstrate knowledge of one's expected role(s) in organizational and community response plans activated during a disaster or public health emergency. 2.0
- Communicate effectively with others in a disaster or public health emergency. 4.0
- Demonstrate knowledge of surge capacity assets consistent with one's role in organizational, agency, and/or community response plans. 6.0
- Demonstrate knowledge of principles and practices for the clinical management of all ages and populations affected by disasters and public health emergencies, in accordance with professional scope of practice. 7.0

Leadership

- Demonstrate situational awareness of actual/potential health hazards before, during, and after a disaster or public health emergency. 3.0
- Demonstrate knowledge of public health principles and practices for the management of all ages and populations affected by disasters and public health emergencies. 8.0

Community Resiliency

- Demonstrate knowledge of ethical principles to protect the health and safety of all ages, populations, and communities affected by a disaster or public health emergency. 9.0
- Demonstrate knowledge of legal principles to protect the health and safety of all ages, populations, and communities affected by a disaster or public health emergency. 10.0
- Demonstrate knowledge of short- and long-term considerations for recovery of all ages, populations, and communities affected by a disaster or public health emergency. 11.0

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MRC Core Competencies Training Plan (as of January 2022)



The MRC Core Competencies Training Plan is a suggested guide for training MRC volunteers at the local level. It presents a “menu” of options to MRC unit leaders and volunteers composed of training courses that align with the DMPH Competencies. MRC units can choose training courses from the training matrix, use other training sources not listed in the matrix, or create their own unit-specific training based on the DMPH Competencies.

How to Use the MRC Training Matrix

The MRC Core Competencies Training Plan is organized using the following categories:

- **Learning paths** are groups of competencies related to certain topics that align with volunteer motivations. The four learning paths are Volunteer Response, Volunteer Preparedness, Volunteer Leadership, and Volunteer Support for Community Resiliency.
- **DMPH Competencies** serve as the foundational competency set for MRC volunteers and represent a baseline level of knowledge and skills that all MRC volunteers should have, regardless of their role within the MRC unit.
- **MRC performance qualifications** break down the DMPH Competencies into measurable, MRC-specific qualities (i.e., knowledge, skills, and attitudes) and actions that a volunteer should have or be able to perform in order to be considered competent in an area.
- **Suggested training/tools** are recommended resources and courses, most of which are available online and free of cost, that will enable volunteers to meet the competencies. The training list is not comprehensive; rather, it is a starting point for unit leaders to consider. The courses are accessible through MRC-TRAIN. (**The DMPH Competencies have an associated training series that are eligible for Continuing Medical Education (CME) or Continuing Nursing Education (CNE) credit. These courses are denoted with an asterisk in the matrix.*)
- **Time** is the estimated length of time required to complete the training.
- **Volunteer tier level** applies to the level of training (introductory, intermediate, or advanced) and the appropriate volunteer tier level.
 - **Tier Level 1:** Advanced level of knowledge for volunteers serving in a specialized or supervisory response role
 - **Tier Level 2:** Intermediate level of knowledge for volunteers wishing to expand their skills and abilities
 - **Tier Level 3:** Introductory level of knowledge that all volunteers should have
 - **Tier Level 4:** Volunteers who have registered but have not completed MRC orientation
 - **Unassigned:** New volunteers who have not completed registration or orientation

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Accessing and Registering for Courses on MRC-TRAIN

MRC-TRAIN is an online training platform that allows MRC unit leaders and volunteers to access, register, and share MRC-related, public health, and emergency preparedness courses. Use the following instructions to access MRC-TRAIN and the course recommendations listed below:

1. Login to MRC-TRAIN at www.train.org/mrc.
2. Search for courses by keyword or Course ID #.
3. To register for a course, click on the course title and then click the **+Register** tab. Next, select your credit (if applicable) and click **Launch**. The course will open in a new window.
4. The 2021 MRC Core Competencies Training Plan can be found at www.train.org/mrc/training_plan/4101.

MRC Core Competencies Training Plan				
Learning Path: Volunteer Preparedness				
DMPH Competency	MRC Performance Qualifications	Suggested Training and MRC-TRAIN Course Number	Time	Volunteer Tier Level
1.0 Demonstrate personal and family preparedness for disasters and public health emergencies.	Complete a personal and family preparedness plan.	• Personal and Family Preparedness* - MRC-TRAIN 1081145	25 minutes	Level 3
		• Animal Emergency Preparedness - MRC-TRAIN 1025307	1 hour	Level 2
5.0 Demonstrate knowledge of personal safety measures that can be implemented in a disaster or public health emergency.	Demonstrate safe behaviors during MRC activities.	• Personal Safety* - MRC-TRAIN 1081353	40 minutes	Level 3
		• Workforce Resiliency 2: Individual and Organizational Preparedness - MRC-TRAIN 1021348	2.25 hours	Level 3
		• Blood-borne Pathogen Overview - MRC-TRAIN 1040544	10 minutes	Level 3
		• CDC Project Firstline: What is PPE? - MRC-TRAIN 1096546	4 minutes	Level 3
		• Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Healthcare Settings - MRC-TRAIN 1099936	1 hour	Level 2
		• Disaster Responder Health and Safety - MRC-TRAIN 1037220	6 hours	Level 1

*DMPH Competencies have an associated training series that is eligible for CME or CNE credit. These courses are denoted with an asterisk in the matrix.

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Learning Path: Volunteer Response

DMPH Competency	MRC Performance Qualifications	Suggested Training and MRC-TRAIN Course Number	Time	Volunteer Tier Level
2.0 Demonstrate knowledge of one's expected role(s) in organizational and community response plans activated during a disaster or public health emergency	Follow procedures to successfully activate, report, and demobilize.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expected Roles in Organizational & Community Response Plans During a Disaster or Public Health Emergency* - MRC-TRAIN 1081338 	40 minutes	Level 3
	Follow policies and procedures related to professional and ethical representation of the MRC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FEMA IS-100.C: An Introduction to the Incident Command System - MRC-TRAIN 1078825 	1-2 hours	Level 2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FEMA IS-700.B: An Introduction to the National Incident Management System - MRC-TRAIN 1078831 	1-2 hours	Level 2
	Describe the chain of command (e.g. NIMS, ICS, EMS) during MRC activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IS-200.C: Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response - MRC-TRAIN 1084004 	1-2 hours	Level 1
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IS-800.D: National Response Framework, an Introduction - MRC-TRAIN 1091330 	3 hours	Level 1
4.0 Communicate effectively with others in a disaster or public health emergency	Describe the chain of command (e.g. NIMS, ICS, EMS) during MRC activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication* - MRC-TRAIN 1081351 	1 hour	Level 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk Communication in Public Health Emergencies - MRC-TRAIN 1009201 	3 hours	Level 2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FEMA IS-242.B: Effective Communication - MRC-TRAIN 1052535 	Self-paced	Level 2
6.0 Demonstrate knowledge of surge capacity assets consistent with one's role in organizational, agency, and/or community response plans	Describe how MRC serves the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surge Capacity* - MRC-TRAIN 1081356 	25 minutes	Level 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PODs (Points of Dispensing): Public Health Training for Staff and Volunteers - MRC-TRAIN 1037506 	30 minutes	Level 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SNS Overview Course - MRC-TRAIN 1093663 	1 hour	Level 2
7.0 Demonstrate knowledge of principles and practices for the clinical management of all ages and populations affected by disasters and public health emergencies, in accordance with professional scope of practice	Identify the impact of an event on the behavioral health of the MRC member and their family, team, and community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinical Management Principles* - MRC-TRAIN 1081357 	40 minutes	Level 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Psychological First Aid: A Minnesota Community Supported Model - MRC-TRAIN 1050404 	45 minutes	Level 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protecting Your Physical and Mental Health: Before, During, and After a Disaster - MRC-TRAIN 1091366 	1 hour	Level 3
	Describe how MRC serves the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disaster Behavioral Health - MRC-TRAIN 1021342 	1 hour	Level 2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) - MRC-TRAIN 1079049 	1.25 hours	Level 2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nurses on the Front Line: Preparing for and Responding to Emergencies and Disasters - MRC-TRAIN 1013008 	Self-paced	Level 1/2

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Learning Path: Volunteer Leadership

DMPH Competency	MRC Performance Qualifications	Suggested Training and MRC-TRAIN Course Number	Time	Volunteer Tier Level
3.0 Demonstrate situational awareness of actual/potential health hazards before, during, and after a disaster or public health emergency.	Describe how MRC serves the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Situational Awareness* - MRC-TRAIN 1081343 	25 minutes	Level 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You Are the Help Until Help Arrives - MRC-TRAIN 1069847 	25 minutes	Level 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Health's Role During a Hurricane - MRC-TRAIN 1093428 	1 hour	Level 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Health Issues in Disasters - MRC-TRAIN 1009200 	2 hours	Level 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of Public Health and Volunteers in Emergencies - MRC-TRAIN 1040537 	4 minutes	Level 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Radiation Preparedness: Community Reception Centers and the MRC - MRC-TRAIN 1052705 	45 minutes	Level 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core Information Needs for Situational Awareness and Response Management - MRC-TRAIN 1056914 	20 minutes	Level 1/2
8.0 Demonstrate knowledge of public health principles and practices for the management of all ages and populations affected by disasters and public health emergencies.	Demonstrate cultural humility during MRC activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Health Principles* - MRC-TRAIN 1081358 	1 hour	Level 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability and Disaster - MRC-TRAIN 1052223 	1 hour (webinar)	Level 3
	Describe how MRC serves the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Awareness: Introduction to Cultural Competency and Humility - MRC-TRAIN 1062987 	30 minutes	Level 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Competency - PowerPoint slides 	n/a	Level 3
	Identify the role of public health in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IS-505: Religious and Cultural Literacy and Competency in Disaster - MRC-TRAIN 1063152 	4 hours	Level 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Competency for Community Management of Special Needs Patients in Disaster - MRC-TRAIN 1045488 	4 hours	Level 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Role of Health Literacy in Disaster Preparedness - MRC-TRAIN 1013551 	2 hours	Level 1

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Learning Path: Volunteer Support for Community Resiliency

DMPH Competency	MRC Performance Qualifications	Suggested Training and MRC-TRAIN Course Number	Time	Volunteer Tier Level
9.0 Demonstrate knowledge of ethical principles to protect the health and safety of all ages, populations, and communities affected by a disaster or public health emergency.	Follow policies and procedures related to professional and ethical representation of the MRC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethical Principles* - MRC-TRAIN 1081360 	40 minutes	Level 3
	Demonstrate cultural humility during MRC activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethics and Public Health: How Public Health Reacts Ethically in a Disaster - MRC-TRAIN 1042347 	4 hours	Level 3
10.0 Demonstrate knowledge of legal principles to protect the health and safety of all ages, populations, and communities affected by a disaster or public health emergency.	Demonstrate safe behaviors during MRC activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal Principles* - MRC-TRAIN 1081361 	1 hour	Level 3
	Follow policies and procedures related to professional and ethical representation of the MRC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Health and the Law: An Emergency Preparedness Training Kit - MRC-TRAIN 1050167 	30 minutes	Level 3
	Demonstrate cultural humility during MRC activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Health Emergency Law Course: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Unit 1</i>—Introduction to Emergency Management Systems Preparedness and Response - MRC-TRAIN 1084118 <i>Unit 2</i>—Protection of Persons, Volunteers, and Responders - MRC-TRAIN 1084126 <i>Unit 3</i>—Emergency Powers: Management and Protection of Property and Supplies - MRC-TRAIN 1084130 	1 hour 1 hour 1 hour	Level 2
11.0 Demonstrate knowledge of short- and long-term considerations for recovery of all ages, populations, and communities affected by a disaster or public health emergency.	Identify the impact of an event on the behavioral health of the MRC member, their family, team and community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short- and Long-term Considerations for Recovery* - MRC-TRAIN 1081365 	20 minutes	Level 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Media and Long-term Recovery - MRC-TRAIN 1052242 		Level 3
	Demonstrate cultural humility during MRC activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caring for Older Adults in Disasters: A Curriculum for Health Professionals - MRC-TRAIN 1059666 	30-120 minutes	Level 2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long Term Recovery Basics (4-part webinar) - MRC-TRAIN 1052226 	2-4 hours	Level 2

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