MRC Leadership Workshop

San Antonio, Texas

General Session: Recovery

medical reserve corps

2025 MRC Leadership Workshop
April 28, 2025 | San Antonio, TX

NACCHO
National Association of County & City Health Officials

Community Recovery

Medical Reserve Corp Engagement

Jerry Joseph, MPH

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Understanding Community Recovery

- Recovery is the process of restoring the community after a public health emergency.
- It involves rebuilding infrastructure, restoring health and social services, and addressing long-term health impacts.
- Recovery can take months or even years.

MRC's Unique Role in Recovery

- MRC units are local, trained, and flexible.
- Volunteers can address both clinical and non-clinical needs.
- MRCs are trusted community assets.

Recovery Roles for MRC Volunteers

- Public health education and outreach
- Mental health support and psychological first aid
- Volunteer coordination
- Shelter support, vaccination clinics, community assessments

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Supporting Local Health Departments

Provide surge staffing and extend capacity

Assist with community engagement and data collection

Help reopen public health services

MRC Trainings for Recovery Capacity

- **MRC-TRAIN:** Online courses on public health recovery and deployment readiness
- **FEMA EMI:** Disaster recovery and emergency management training
- **CDC COCA:** Public health emergency webinars and resources
- **Psychological First Aid (PFA):** Emotional support training post-disaster
- **CERT Program:** Community preparedness and response skills
- **State & Local MRC Training:** Virtual sessions and specialized courses

Collaborating with other Volunteer Orgs

- American Red Cross: leads sheltering and disaster relief
- VOADs: offer food, housing, spiritual care
- MRCs focus on public health—complementing, not competing

Defining a Clear MRC Role in Recovery

- Align recovery roles with MRC's health-focused mission
- Fill gaps in wellness checks, mental health, and health education
- Establish relationships during preparedness to ensure involvement in recovery

Best Practices from the Field

Distributing health kits and supported shelter operations post-hurricanes

Strengthening community wellness through public health clinics and outreach

Promoting mental health resilience with crisis support services post-disasters

Key Takeaways & Next Steps

- Recovery is a long-term process that depends on collaboration
- MRCs are trusted assets for public health recovery
- Ongoing training, partnerships, and planning are essential
- Define your local recovery role now

Questions or Comments?

APP MRC

- Timeline
- Recruitment
- Response
- Retention
- Recovery

How We Came To Be

- COVID-19 Exposed Gaps: WNC hospitals and health departments were overwhelmed and understaffed; volunteer coordination was ineffective.
- Community Response: A grassroots Google Form received thousands of volunteer responses—highlighting untapped local support and systemic volunteer access issues in rural areas.
- Proven Need: Data from a 2022 needs assessment showed healthcare access disparities, including provider shortages, transportation barriers, and disability prevalence.
- Local & Stakeholder Support: Strong backing from communities, health agencies, emergency services, and universities affirmed the need for a dedicated MRC.
- Official Formation (2023): After rigorous planning, stakeholder engagement, and federal approval, APP MRC was officially launched.

How We Are Being

Active & Growing: Since Hurricane Helene (2024), volunteer engagement surged. The unit now supports disaster response, public health outreach, and resource mapping.

Sustainable Future: With MRC STTRONG grant funding and university support, the unit is building a scalable model with branding, staff, and strategic communications.

Recruitment

50 to 950?

Response

- 📱 Opened and continuously staffing a non-emergency Call Line available to all counties and people nationally
- 🚚 Deploying volunteers to unload trucks of supplies for hospitals and clinics in the region
- 🍉 Resource coordination through the call center and local officials as needed
- 🏥 Supporting the shelters in the area with MRC clinical providers as needed
- 🤝 Onboard and register volunteers with MRCs in the region, including APP MRC.

Retention

- Operation Call All Volunteers
- Communication and Marketing Plan
  - Social Media
  - Website
  - Quarterly Event
  - Monthly Newsletter

Recovery

- Showing up
  - Community Coalitions
  - Clean-ups
  - Regional Collaborations
  - State-wide Partnerships

MN Behavioral Health MRC

Recovery Support Services

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MN Disaster Behavioral Health Program Coordinator/
MN BH MRC Administrator

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What is the BH MRC?

- The BH MRC is a statewide group of volunteer behavioral health specialists, whose mission is to support the global resilience of individuals, communities, and the Incident Command System during disasters by providing expert skills in disaster behavioral health.

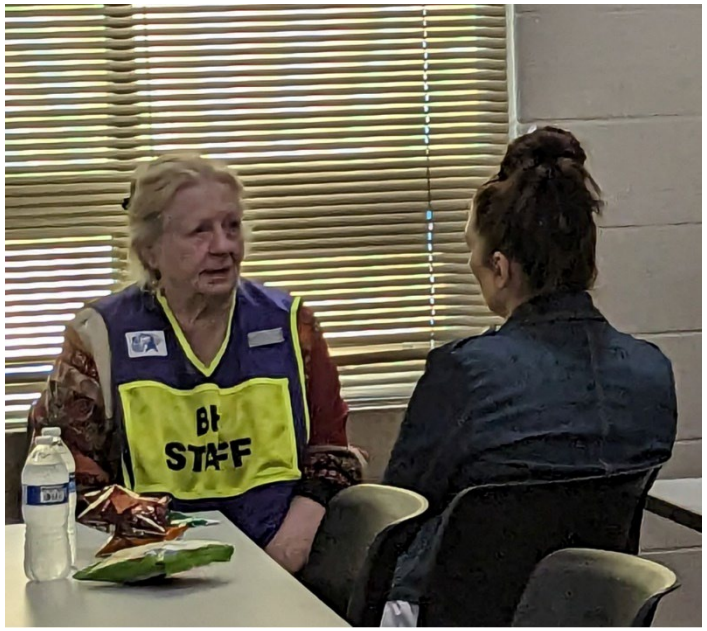
- Disasters in which the BH MRC may be deployed include, but are not limited to, natural disasters, man-made accidents, terrorism, pandemics, school emergencies, and public health emergencies.

Disaster Recovery Support Services

- The BH MRC provides the following recovery services:
  - Participation in the MNVOAD Long-term Recovery planning (starts during response).
  - BH MRC volunteer on each FEMA/State Property Damage Team (PDA) and BH MRC teams at Disaster Recovery Centers (DRC).
  - Data collection to support applications for Crisis Counseling Program, Disaster Case Management, D-SNAP, and to assist in long-term recovery planning.
  - Psychological First Aid & Skills for Psychological Recovery coaching.
  - Referrals to community support services and professional behavioral health resources.
  - Education and training to first and secondary responders and the disaster-impacted community on behavioral health related topics.

2024 MN Spring Flooding: Disaster Recovery Centers

- June 2024 flooding from excessive rainfall hit southern and northeastern MN
- From August 9th – the end of September 2024 - 3 long-term and 6 short-term FEMA/State DRCs were opened across the state.
  - BH MRC Teams provided handouts and were deployed in-person at 2 of the long-term and 2 of the short-term DRCs during most of August 2024.
  - The BH MRC provided handouts and virtual services at the DRC's during the last week of August and September 2024 due to a COVID-19 spread among responders.



Community Behavioral Health Recovery Needs Assessment Checklist

Tool to use in community disaster preparedness planning, and to access community disaster impact and needs to inform recovery planning.

- Piloted in regional tabletop exercises in 2023.
- Utilized in disaster recovery efforts in 2024.

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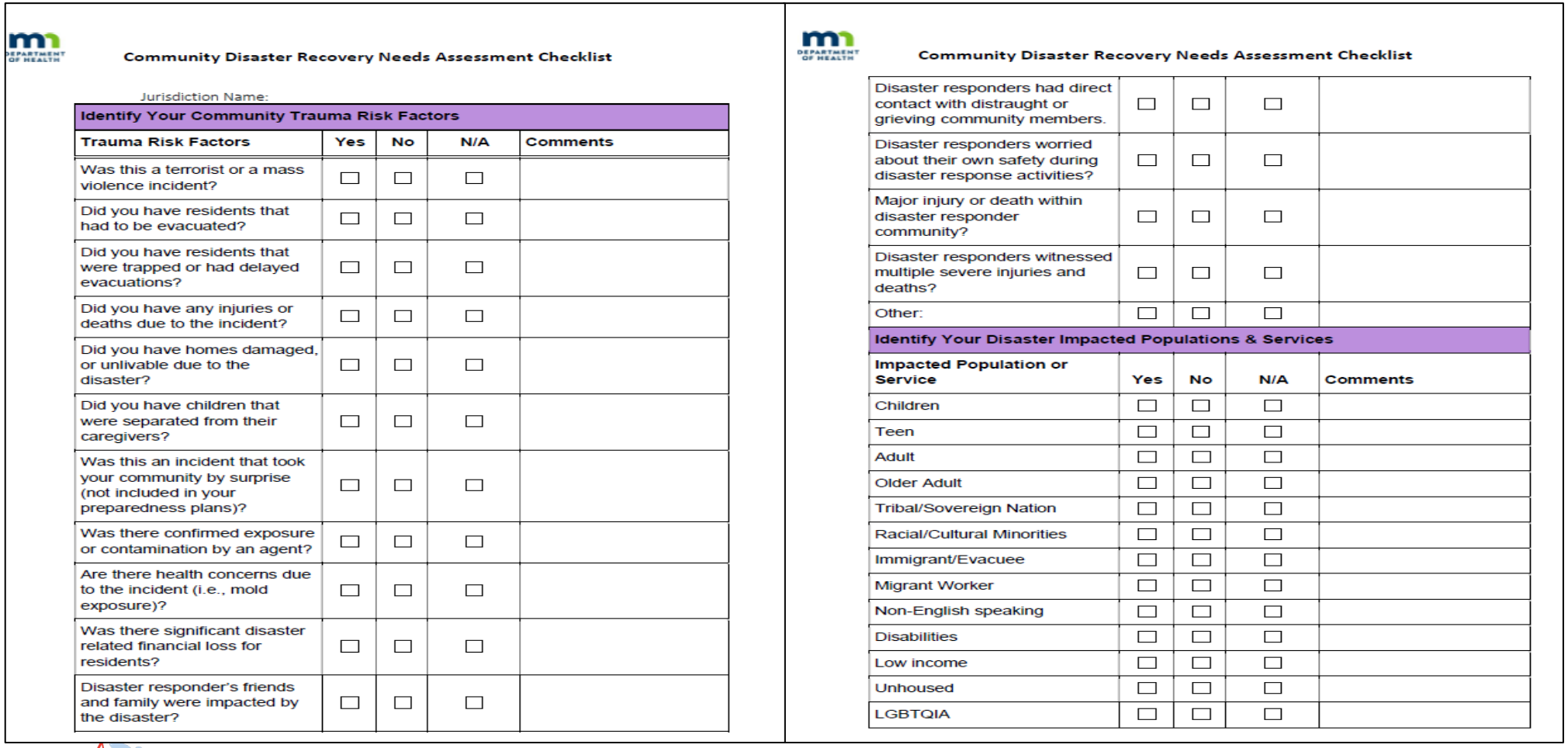
Community Behavioral Health Recovery Needs Assessment Checklist continued



Community Disaster Recovery Needs Assessment Checklist

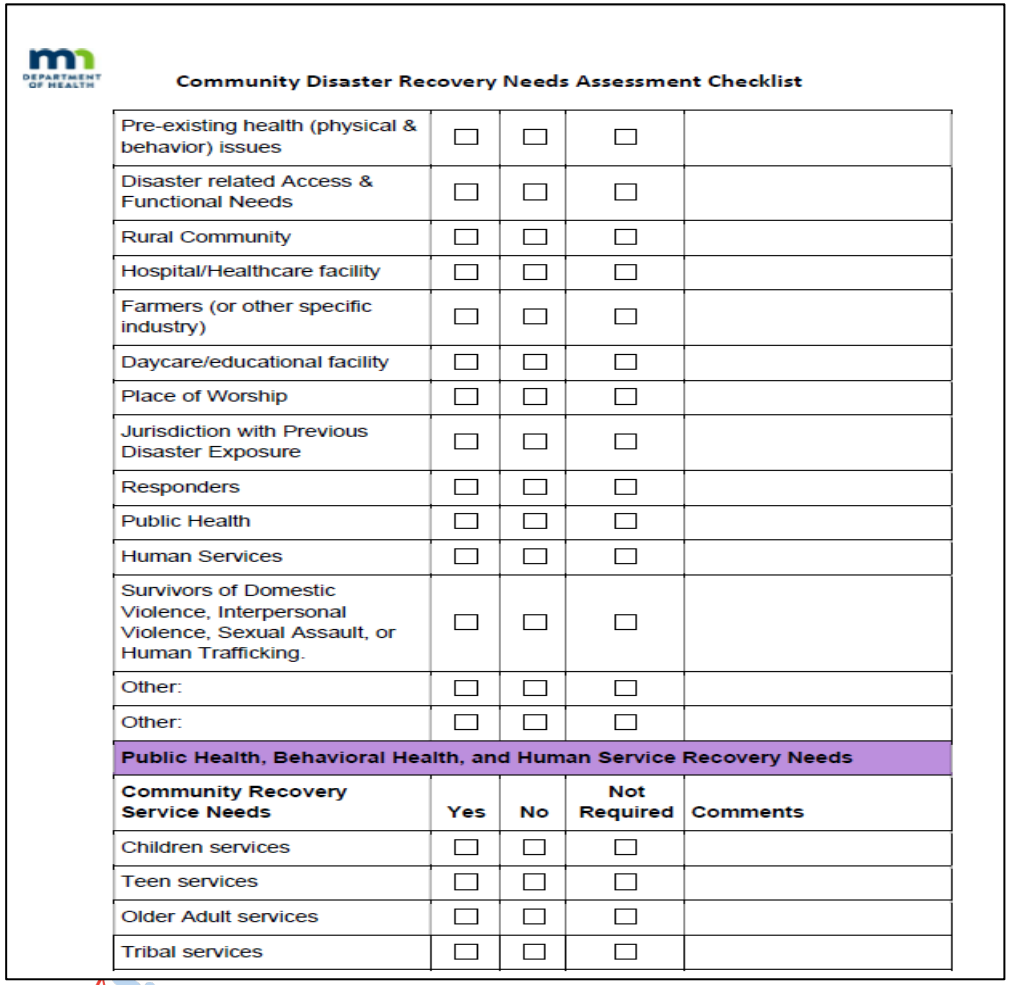
Jurisdiction Name:

Identify Your Community Trauma Risk Factors				
Trauma Risk Factors	**Yes**	**No**	**N/A**	**Comments**
Was this a terrorist or a mass violence incident?	☐	☐	☐	
Did you have residents that had to be evacuated?	☐	☐	☐	
Did you have residents that were trapped or had delayed evacuations?	☐	☐	☐	
Did you have any injuries or deaths due to the incident?	☐	☐	☐	
Did you have homes damaged, or unlivable due to the disaster?	☐	☐	☐	
Did you have children that were separated from their caregivers?	☐	☐	☐	
Was this an incident that took your community by surprise (not included in your preparedness plans)?	☐	☐	☐	
Was there confirmed exposure or contamination by an agent?	☐	☐	☐	
Are there health concerns due to the incident (i.e., mold exposure)?	☐	☐	☐	
Was there significant disaster related financial loss for residents?	☐	☐	☐	
Disaster responder's friends and family were impacted by the disaster?	☐	☐	☐	

Community Disaster Recovery Needs Assessment Checklist

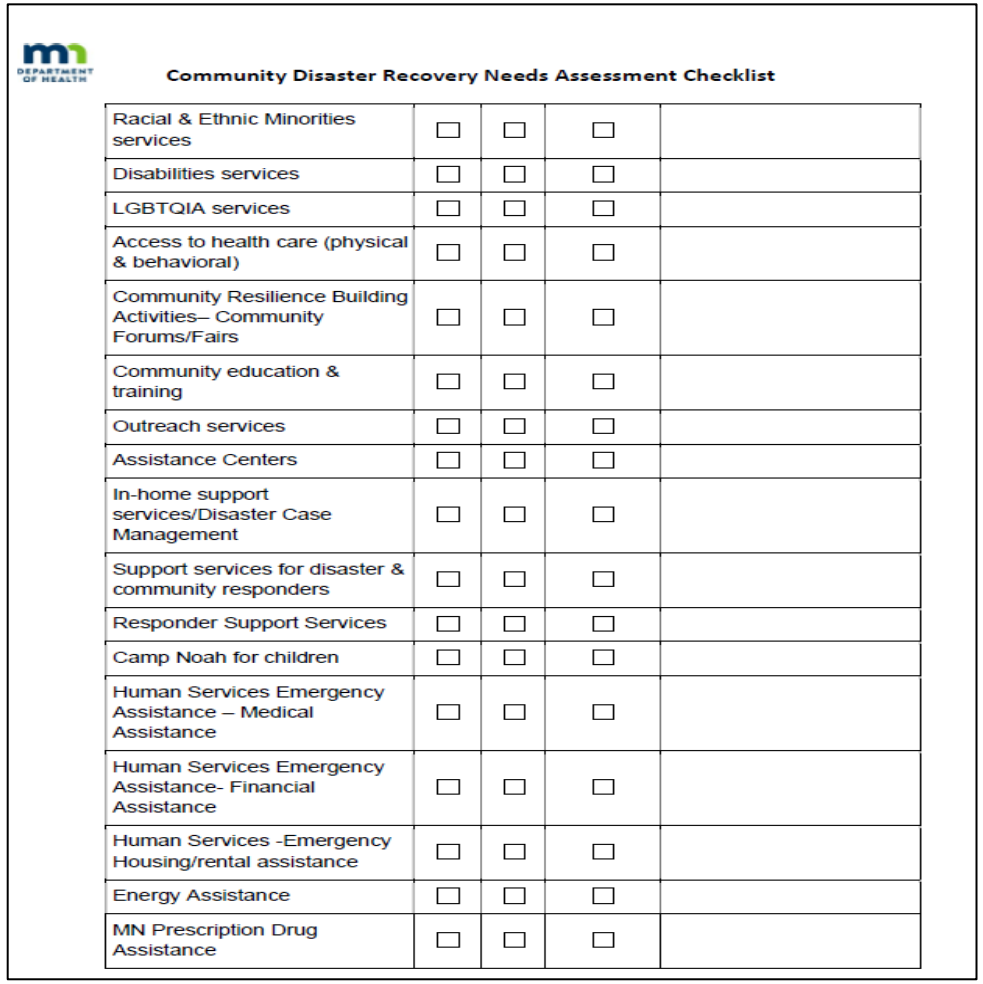
Disaster responders had direct contact with distraught or grieving community members.	☐	☐	☐	
Disaster responders worried about their own safety during disaster response activities?	☐	☐	☐	
Major injury or death within disaster responder community?	☐	☐	☐	
Disaster responders witnessed multiple severe injuries and deaths?	☐	☐	☐	
Other:	☐	☐	☐	
Identify Your Disaster Impacted Populations & Services				
Impacted Population or Service	**Yes**	**No**	**N/A**	**Comments**
Children	☐	☐	☐	
Teen	☐	☐	☐	
Adult	☐	☐	☐	
Older Adult	☐	☐	☐	
Tribal/Sovereign Nation	☐	☐	☐	
Racial/Cultural Minorities	☐	☐	☐	
Immigrant/Evacuee	☐	☐	☐	
Migrant Worker	☐	☐	☐	
Non-English speaking	☐	☐	☐	
Disabilities	☐	☐	☐	
Low income	☐	☐	☐	
Unhoused	☐	☐	☐	
LGBTQIA	☐	☐	☐	

Community Behavioral Health Recovery Needs Assessment Checklist continued



Community Disaster Recovery Needs Assessment Checklist

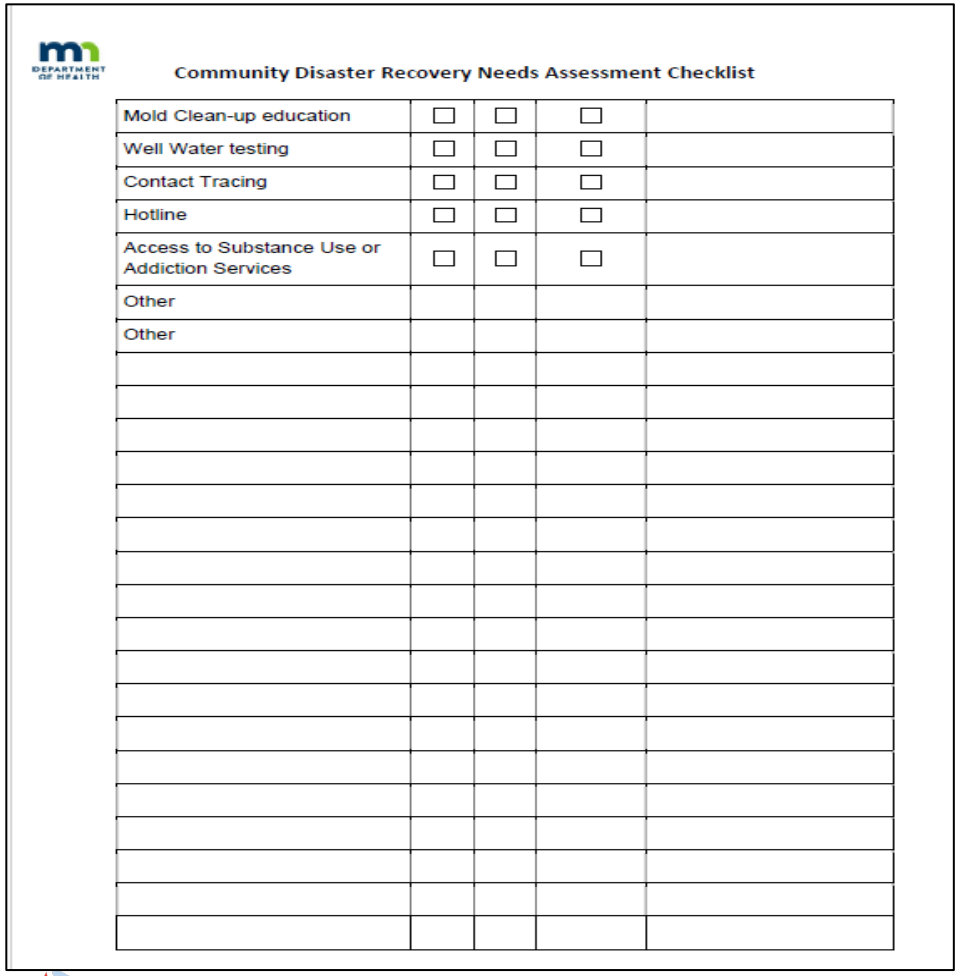
Pre-existing health (physical & behavior) issues	☐	☐	☐	
Disaster related Access & Functional Needs	☐	☐	☐	
Rural Community	☐	☐	☐	
Hospital/Healthcare facility	☐	☐	☐	
Farmers (or other specific industry)	☐	☐	☐	
Daycare/educational facility	☐	☐	☐	
Place of Worship	☐	☐	☐	
Jurisdiction with Previous Disaster Exposure	☐	☐	☐	
Responders	☐	☐	☐	
Public Health	☐	☐	☐	
Human Services	☐	☐	☐	
Survivors of Domestic Violence, Interpersonal Violence, Sexual Assault, or Human Trafficking.	☐	☐	☐	
Other:	☐	☐	☐	
Other:	☐	☐	☐	
Public Health, Behavioral Health, and Human Service Recovery Needs				
Community Recovery Service Needs	**Yes**	**No**	**Not Required**	**Comments**
Children services	☐	☐	☐	
Teen services	☐	☐	☐	
Older Adult services	☐	☐	☐	
Tribal services	☐	☐	☐	



Community Disaster Recovery Needs Assessment Checklist

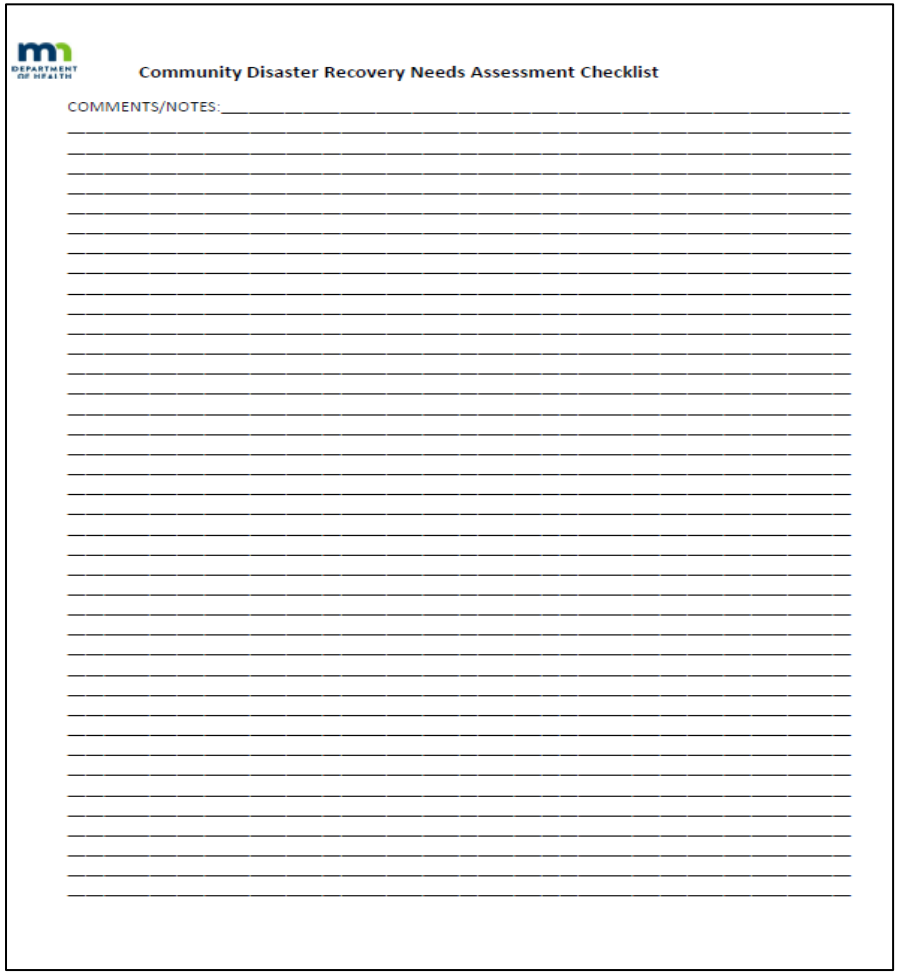
Racial & Ethnic Minorities services	☐	☐	☐	
Disabilities services	☐	☐	☐	
LGBTQIA services	☐	☐	☐	
Access to health care (physical & behavioral)	☐	☐	☐	
Community Resilience Building Activities– Community Forums/Fairs	☐	☐	☐	
Community education & training	☐	☐	☐	
Outreach services	☐	☐	☐	
Assistance Centers	☐	☐	☐	
In-home support services/Disaster Case Management	☐	☐	☐	
Support services for disaster & community responders	☐	☐	☐	
Responder Support Services	☐	☐	☐	
Camp Noah for children	☐	☐	☐	
Human Services Emergency Assistance – Medical Assistance	☐	☐	☐	
Human Services Emergency Assistance- Financial Assistance	☐	☐	☐	
Human Services -Emergency Housing/rental assistance	☐	☐	☐	
Energy Assistance	☐	☐	☐	
MN Prescription Drug Assistance	☐	☐	☐	

Community Behavioral Health Recovery Needs Assessment Checklist continued



Community Disaster Recovery Needs Assessment Checklist

Mold Clean-up education	☐	☐	☐	
Well Water testing	☐	☐	☐	
Contact Tracing	☐	☐	☐	
Hotline	☐	☐	☐	
Access to Substance Use or Addiction Services	☐	☐	☐	
Other				
Other				



Community Disaster Recovery Needs Assessment Checklist

COMMENTS/NOTES:

MN Psychological First Aid Resources

- Virtual PFA training is offered on the 2nd Monday of the month from 3-4:30pm CST every other month (August 11) with registration at MRCTRAIN course ID 1101620.
- Online Psychological First Aid: A Minnesota Community Supported Model – developed by the UMN Center for Public Health & MN Department of Health- 45 minutes and .75 CEU registration at MRCTRAIN Course ID 1050404.
- Just in Time PFA Video 11-minute video based on the MDH PFA First Aid developed by Hennepin County and MDH http://www.health.state.mn.us/oep/responsesystems/pfavideo.html

PFA

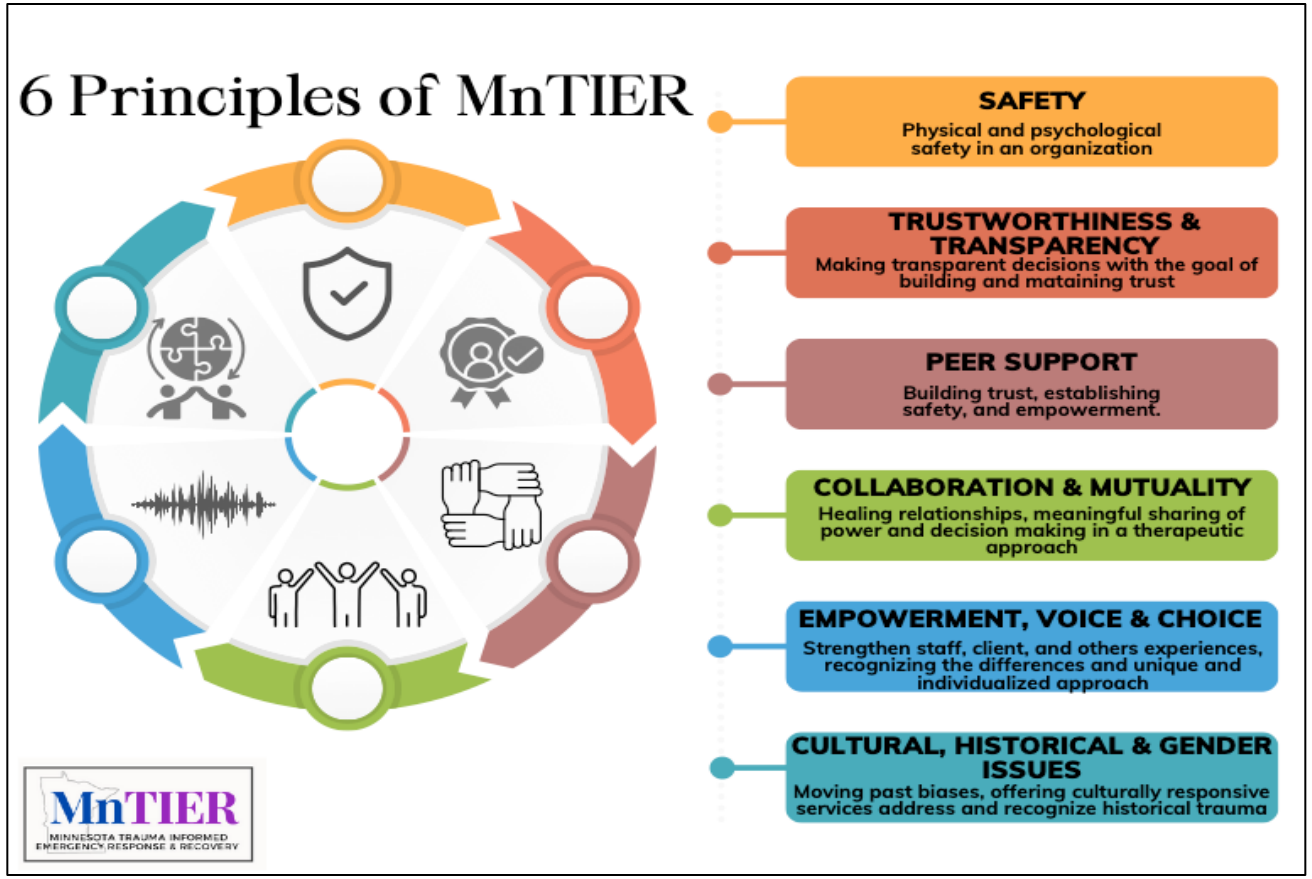
Psychological First Aid Tutorial App for iPhone and Android - developed by the UMN Center for Public Health & MN Department of Health.

When PFA is Not Enough: Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR)

- Developed by the National Child Traumatic Stress Network and the National Center for PTSD, SPR is an evidence informed modular approach to help children, adolescents, adults, and families in the intermediate (weeks-months) period after disasters and terrorism.
- SPR is similar to PFA in that you don't have to be a mental health professional to provide SPR.
- Although, unlike PFA you need to be supervised by a mental health professional.

MnTIER (Minnesota Trauma-Informed Emergency Response & Recovery)

MnTIER provides an overarching framework for post-disaster planning that recognizes the impact of trauma on the disaster responders and the communities they serve by providing actionable strategies to mitigate harm and build resilience at both the responder, team, and organizational level.



Empowering First & Secondary Responders to Combat Traumatic Experiences

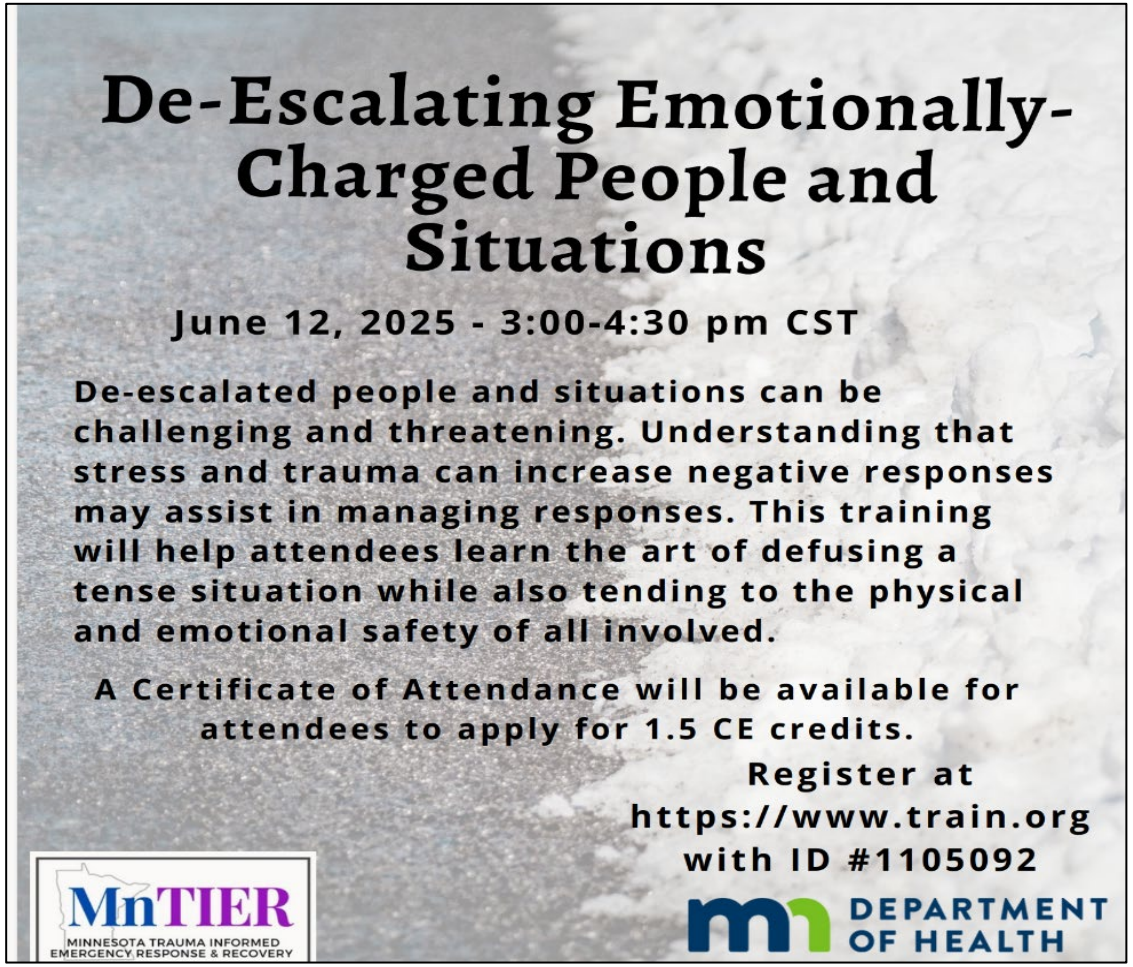
MnTIER MINNESOTA TRAUMA INFORMED EMERGENCY RESPONSE & RECOVERY for the Disaster Responder encourages the implementation of trauma-informed care principles for disaster and crisis responders' pre-deployment, during deployment, and post-deployment to mitigate stress, burnout, and compassion fatigue.

MnTIER Resources

- Responder Self-Care Checklist and Reference Guide - QR code
- Introduction to Trauma-Informed Care – Online Module (Free) .75 Continuing Education Hours https://www.train.org/ Course ID # 1120560
  - Provides a basic introduction to a trauma-informed approach during an emergency response. In addition, this course addresses how a trauma-informed approach is a framework for organizations and learners to understand, recognize, and respond to the impact of trauma.

This course is the first course in the Minnesota Trauma-Informed Emergency Response and Recovery (MnTIER) training program.

Virtual Verbal De-escalation Training



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