



CONFIDENTIAL PRE-DEPLOYMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

INTRODUCTION:

Providing care and support in the immediate aftermath of disaster can be an enriching professional and personal experience that enhances satisfaction through helping others. It can also be physically and emotionally exhausting.

Sometimes people volunteer without thoroughly considering whether or not engaging in disaster relief work is really appropriate for them at the time. This is why we would like you to take a few minutes now and complete this questionnaire.

The information you provide on this questionnaire is for you and you alone. It is completely private and, unless you decide to do so, you do not have to share the results. However, if you find yourself answering the questions below in such a way as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that perhaps you should not deploy today then we urge you to recognize this possibility and discuss it with the Staging Liaison, your Team Leader and/or your Unit Coordinator.

Remember, it is always better to be safe than sorry.

PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS

Being sufficiently physically and emotionally healthy are two crucial factors for a successful deployment. Take a moment and consider the following.

1. Have you had any of these conditions in the past 12 months? (Yes=1 or No=0)

___ Anemia

___ Asthma or allergies

___ Arthritis or rheumatism

___ Serious back trouble

___ Chronic bronchitis

___ Cancer

___ Diabetes

- Heart trouble
- High blood pressure
- Kidney trouble
- Stroke
- Stomach or duodenal ulcer
- Other physical ailments
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Other psychological and/or substance abuse problems

2. Do you believe that you are physically and emotionally healthy enough to complete this deployment? (Yes=0; I don't know=1; No=2)

- Yes
- I don't know
- No

Total Score **PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS**

WORK CONSIDERATIONS

Stressors at work can have a significant negative impact upon a volunteer. Assess how taking time off for disaster deployment might affect your current work life. Is your employer supportive of your involvement with the Medical Reserve Corp? Will you be given leave time or will you have to take vacation time off to deploy?

How often does each of these things happen in your current job?

3. Do you have conflicts with your supervisor? (Never=0; Some of the time=1; Often=2)

- Never
- Some of the time
- Often

4. Do you have conflicts with you coworkers?

Never

Some of the time

Often

**5. Is your work supervisor supportive of you leaving work to deploy to this disaster?
(Yes=0; I don't know=1; No=2)**

Yes

I don't know

No

6. Are your coworkers supportive of you leaving work to deploy to this disaster?

Yes

I don't know

No

Total Score **WORK CONSIDERATIONS**

FAMILY CONSIDERATIONS

Take a moment and assess your family's ability to cope with you working in a disaster setting. Is your family prepared for your absence during your deployment, which may span days or weeks? Do you have unresolved family/relationship issues that will make it challenging for you to focus on disaster related responsibilities? Will your support system (extended family/friends) assume some of your responsibilities while you are away? Please consider the following.

SPOUSE/PARTNER

**7. Does your spouse/partner presently disagree with you about important things?
(Never=0; Some of the time=1; Often=2)**

Never

Some of the time

Often

8. Does he or she presently expect too much of you?

Never

Some of the time

Often

9. Is your spouse or partner supportive of you deploying to this disaster? (Yes=0; I don't know=1; No=2)

Yes

I don't know

No

CHILDREN

**10. Do your children presently demonstrate significant behavioral problems?
(Never=0; Some of the time=1; Often=2)**

Never

Some of the time

Often

11. Do your children presently demonstrate significant school problems?

Never

Some of the time

Often

12. Are your children supportive of you deploying to this disaster? (Yes=0; I don't know=1; No=2)

Yes

I don't know

No

Total Score **FAMILY CONSIDERATIONS**

GENERAL LIFE CONSIDERATIONS

Disasters by their very nature are dangerous and stressful incidents. Before deploying the volunteer needs to ask himself or herself some hard questions. For example, do you believe that, today, you are capable of (a) working with individuals who are experiencing intense distress and extreme reactions, including screaming, hysterical crying, anger, or withdrawal; (b) working with individuals in non-traditional settings; (c) working in a chaotic, unpredictable environment; and/or (d) working with and providing support to individuals from diverse cultures, ethnic groups, developmental levels, and faith backgrounds.

When considering these questions one factor to assess is the level of general life stress you have been experiencing over the last year. Study the list below. Obviously this list is not complete. However, it is designed to help you consider whether or not the accumulation of negative life events in your recent past should preclude you from deploying.

13. Have any of these things happened to you in the last year? (Yes=1 or No=0)

Car burglarized

Home burglarized

Personally assaulted

Automobile accident

Did you lose your home through fire, disaster or major catastrophe?

Did you move to a worse home?

Has your financial situation gotten worse?

Did you change to a worse job?

___ Were you laid off?

___ Were you fired?

___ Were you demoted at work?

___ Have you been separated in the last year?

___ Have you been divorced in the last year?

___ Have you been widowed in the last year?

___ Has a family member died in the last year?

___ Were you or a loved one hospitalized in the last year?

___ Does any member of your family have any serious medical conditions or ailments, such as cancer, heart trouble, high blood pressure, arthritis or severe shortness of breath?

14. Taking all things in consideration do you believe that you should deploy today?
(Yes=0; I don't know=1; No=2)

___ Yes

___ I don't know

___ No

___ **Total Score GENERAL LIFE CONSIDERATIONS**

___ **Grand Total Score**

CONCLUSION:

Now that you have completed and scored the questionnaire think about your answers and scores. For example, if you did not answer **Yes** to **Question 14** or if your **Grand Total Score** is **14 or more** we urge you to seek out the Staging Liaison, your Team Leader, and/or your Unit Coordinator, share this information with them, and discuss whether or not you should deploy today. They have been trained to be available for such discussions and to provide confidentiality. Remember, not everyone is available at all times to provide volunteer service. Thank you for your time.



POST-DEPLOYMENT REVIEW

REVIEW LEADER INSTRUCTIONS

INTRODUCTION:

Providing care and support in the immediate aftermath of disaster can be an enriching professional and personal experience. However, it can also be physically and emotionally exhausting. Therefore, immediately after deployment disaster volunteers should participate in a Post Deployment Review. The following presents leader guidelines for conducting the Post Deployment Review.

DISCUSSION:

Common Stress Reactions: Disaster volunteers can experience a number of stress responses, which are considered common when working with survivors. These include:

- Increase or decrease in activity level
- Difficulties sleeping^[L]_[SEP]
- Substance use^[L]_[SEP]
- Numbing
- Irritability, anger, and frustration^[L]_[SEP]
- Vicarious traumatization in the form of shock, fearfulness, horror, helplessness
- Confusion, lack of attention, and difficulty making decisions^[L]_[SEP]
- Physical reactions (headaches, stomachaches, being easily startled)^[L]_[SEP]
- Depressive or anxiety symptoms^[L]_[SEP]
- Decreased social activities

Extreme Stress Reactions: Disaster volunteers may also experience more serious stress responses that warrant seeking support from a professional. These include:

- Compassion stress: helplessness, confusion, isolation
- Compassion fatigue: demoralization, alienation, resignation
- Preoccupation or compulsive re-experiencing of trauma experienced either directly or indirectly
- Attempts to over-control in professional or personal situations
- Withdrawal and isolation

- Preventing feelings by relying on substances, becoming overly preoccupied by work, or drastic changes in sleep (avoidance of sleep or not wanting to get out of bed)
- Serious difficulties in interpersonal relationships, including domestic violence
- Depression accompanied by hopelessness (which has the potential to place individuals at a higher risk for suicide)
- Unnecessary risk-taking

Disaster Volunteer Distress: Disaster workers may become distressed for many reasons, including the following:

- A personal crisis while on assignment
- Reactions to the disaster aftermath or working conditions
- Exacerbation of pre-existing conditions
- Conflicts with other workers
- Being informed of a crisis at home
- Exposure to the same risk factors as clients because they live in the disaster-affected area
- Problems that are the same as among the general population

Goal: The goal of a Post-Deployment Review is to assist disaster volunteers to:

- Successfully transition back to their pre-deployment lives and routines; and
- Begin to incorporate their deployment experience into their lives in a meaningful way.

Guidelines: When delivering a Post-Deployment Review, discussion leaders should adhere to the following principles:

- Participation in post-deployment support should always be voluntary
- While it is usually offered at the end of a relief operation, Post Deployment Review can also be offered at the home unit after deployments
- The time and place of a Review should be convenient and suitable for the disaster volunteers
- Post Deployment Reviews should not be debriefings in any form, nor should they specifically aim to elicit volunteers' feelings (Note: Critical Incident Stress Debriefing is not an approved Medical Reserve Corps nor an American Red Cross intervention.)
- When provided in a group, Post Deployment Review should be psychoeducational and discussion oriented.

Primary Tool: The primary tool used in the Post Deployment Review is the Post Deployment Questionnaire. The administration and explanation of this questionnaire provides the structure around which the Review is presented. The questionnaire is in two parts. Part A asks questions about the volunteer's deployment work environment and questions regarding high risk factors the volunteer may have experienced while on deployment. Answers to these questions can be helpful to unit leaders for future planning as well as alert unit leaders to high risk issues faced by volunteers. Thus the volunteers are requested to complete and hand in their answers to Part A.

Part B asks questions regarding whether or not the volunteer is experiencing certain relevant stress symptoms. During administration of Part B the review leader discusses the reasons why these questions are asked thus educating the volunteer with respect to the relevant issues. Part B ends by providing a list of suggestions the volunteer may consider employing to help readjust to home life and integrate his or her deployment experiences. Part B is a self-assessment and psychoeducational tool and thus the volunteer is requested to keep this material and review it at a later date.

CONCLUSION:

Disaster Volunteer Self Care: In conclusion disaster volunteers should expect a readjustment period upon returning home. They may need to make personal reintegration a priority for a while. To help, volunteers should be encouraged to make every effort to:

- Seek out and give social support.
- Schedule time for a vacation or gradual reintegration into normal life.
- Prepare for worldview changes that may not be mirrored by others in your life.
- Participate in formal help to address your response to relief work if extreme stress persists for greater than two to three weeks.
- Increase leisure activities, stress management, and exercise.
- Pay extra attention to health and nutrition.
- Pay extra attention to rekindling close interpersonal relationships.
- Practice good sleep routines.
- Make time for self-reflection.
- Practice receiving from others.
- Find activities that you enjoy or that make you laugh.
- Try at times not to be in charge or the “expert.”
- Increase experiences that have spiritual or philosophical meaning to you.
- Anticipate that you will experience recurring thoughts or dreams, and that they will decrease over time.
- Keep a journal to get worries off your mind.
- Ask help in parenting if you feel irritable or are having difficulties adjusting to being back at home.

Make every effort to avoid:

- Excessive use of alcohol, illicit drugs, or excessive amounts of prescription drugs.
- Making any big life changes for at least a month.
- Negatively assessing your contribution to relief work.
- Worrying about readjusting.