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2 Checklist and Timeline for Units Joining MA Responds in BP2

As your unit transitions to MA Responds in BP2, there are several tasks that need to be completed. The checklist below describes each task, and the subsequent table provides suggested deadlines for completion.

2.1 Checklist

☐ Identify Local Administrators

Provide DPH with the names and 24/7 contact information of at least two individuals who will serve as the local administrators for the Unit. At least one of these individuals must attend a training on the MA Responds system by October 30, 2020. (See Complete Training Below)

Please complete Appendix C: Administrator Change Form (which is available on the state MRC website) and submit it to Darryen Anderson (darryen.anderson@mass.gov).

☐ Provide Unit Description for MA Responds

The MA Responds site provides a general description of the Medical Reserve Corps program for users signing on to the system and a specific unit description.

The general description of the MRC program provides a context for users deciding to become an MRC volunteer. Once users decide to volunteer with the MRC program and select a region, a list of MA Responds participating MRC units in the region will appear along with a short unit description. Sample unit descriptions are included below for your reference:

The **S-H-A-R MRC** covers the communities of Stoughton, Holbrook, Abington, Avon, Randolph and Rockland. The unit includes nurses, allied health professionals, EMTs, paramedics, and many people without medical training, including ham radio operators, mechanics, carpenters, high school students and retirees. We assist at public health related events such as flu clinics, health fairs, and blood pressure clinics, and at civic events such as road races and special celebrations. We also respond to emergencies, including providing staff for evacuation shelters, warming centers, and cooling centers. We work with the Health Agents and Emergency Management directors in our serviced communities to ensure a coordinated response. We welcome volunteers with or without medical training to help make our communities a better place to live and work.

The **Duxbury Bay Area Regional (DBAR) MRC** is a partnership between the Boards of Health in the communities of Duxbury, Hanson, Marshfield, Pembroke, and Whitman, Massachusetts.
Once written, please send the unit description to Johnna Coggin (jcoggin@mms.org).

☐ Complete Training

As part of the MOU, local MRC unit administrators are required to be trained in the MA Responds system.

There are two types of MA Responds training – Basic and Advanced.¹ Upon joining MA Responds, each unit is required to have at least two administrators who have completed the Basic Training (one must be completed by October). Each unit is also required to have at least one administrator complete the Advanced Training.

Please contact Johnna Coggin (jcoggin@mms.org) to arrange for the training of your unit administrators.

☐ Complete Agreement of Non-Disclosure and CORI Request Form

Each unit administrator must complete an Agreement of Non-Disclosure (AOND) and CORI Request Form that allows them to review the CORI Acknowledgement Forms from volunteers as well as the results of the CORI.

Once completed, please send this form to Darryen Anderson (darryen.anderson@mass.gov).

☐ Send Email to Volunteers with CORI Acknowledgement Form to MDPH

Once your unit has an active profile on MA Responds, we suggest that you contact volunteers in your unit with information about the transition to the MA Responds system. We have provided an email template for you to adapt and suggest you also include a copy of the CORI Acknowledgement Form.

The CORI form can be found at: http://bit.ly/MARespondsCORIForm2020 and the Nationwide Sex Offender Search is completed within MA Responds after the CORI is completed successfully. Please note: CORIs cannot be accepted without photo ID verification. Volunteers must have their photo identification verified and this form signed indicating photo verification by a local program administrator or by a notary public (if local administrator is not available) before sending it in to MDPH with a wet signature for

¹ Please note that these trainings are separate from the MA Responds orientation webinar offered in August 2020.
In order to be considered a member of MA Responds, both checks must be resolved in a satisfactory manner.

☐ **Sign MOU**

To participate in MA Responds, MRC unit administrators must sign the Memorandum of Understanding with the MA Department of Public Health.

Once signed, the MOU should be scanned and emailed and TWO original copies should be mailed to Liz Foley at:

Department of Public Health  
Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management  
67 Forest St. Marlboro, MA 01752  
Attn: Liz Foley

A scanned copy can be sent to Liz.Foley@mass.gov and Darryen.Anderson@mass.gov.

### 2.2 Suggested Timeline

A table with suggested timelines has been developed to help guide a unit’s progress when transitioning to MA Responds (see below). Suggested timeline dates have been provided to ensure a unit has enough time to complete each of the steps for transitioning to MA Responds, while deadlines have been included to ensure compliance with the BP2 MRC Deliverables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Suggested Timeline</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify at least two local</td>
<td>Unit Leader</td>
<td>October 15, 2020</td>
<td>October 30, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>administrators</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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2 While under the state of emergency due to COVID-19, a volunteer may have their CORI form electronically verified by a unit administrator. If a volunteer cannot have their identity verified by a unit administrator or verified by a notary, they may submit via email their CORI form with a copy of their driver’s license or government issued photo ID to maresponds@mass.gov. The registrant may be contacted for a teleconference to verify identification prior to the CORI being processed.

3 Please note that the current MOU will be updated for MA Responds participants, and units will be asked to sign or re-sign in the coming months.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Suggested Timeline</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide unit description to post on MA Responds</td>
<td>Unit Leader</td>
<td>December 1, 2020</td>
<td>March 30, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Agreement of Non-Disclosure and CORI Request Form</td>
<td>Unit Leader</td>
<td>December 1, 2020</td>
<td>December 31, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After unit is live on site, Send email (see template) to volunteers with MA Responds Information</td>
<td>Unit Leader</td>
<td>December 31, 2020</td>
<td>February 15, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CORI acknowledgement form</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Specific Registration Instructions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• MMS Orientation (Optional) Online Training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Any other applicable information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign MOU</td>
<td>Host Agency Representative/ MDPH</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[^4] Contact Johnna or Darryen to arrange your training.

[^5] Upon Receipt from Volunteer
3 INTRODUCTION

MA Responds is an online registration system for health and non-health volunteers. This system is a partnership between the MDPH, local Medical Reserve Corps units, and other volunteer organizations in Massachusetts. Registering with MA Responds allows people to volunteer for a variety of public health events.

The MA Responds system is maintained by MDPH and the Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS). Technical questions should be directed to MMS or MDPH staff.

4 MA RESPONDS REQUIREMENTS AND FEATURES

4.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR UNITS IN MA RESPONDS

- To be a unit in good standing, the unit must have a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with MDPH.\(^6\)

- Unit leaders must also log into the system at least once a week – to check the status of their prospective volunteers.

- At least two administrators need to complete the MA Responds Basic and Advanced Training. Trainings are posted on the state MRC website: http://bit.ly/MARespondsTraining2020-2021 or can be requested at any time.

- Upon a change in unit leadership, please complete an Administrator Change Form (http://bit.ly/MARespondsAdminChangeForm2020) within 60 days of the change and contact the Statewide MRC Coordinator at MDPH.

- All volunteers who register in MA Responds must undergo a CORI (Massachusetts Criminal Offender Record Information) check and a Nationwide Sex Offender Search\(^7\) to be considered deployable. Both forms of background checks will be conducted in accordance with the policies outlined here: http://bit.ly/MARespondsCORIPolicy2020

4.2 MA RESPONDS FEATURES

4.2.1 Credentialing

- Integrates with, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and Office of Inspector General, List of Excluded Individuals/Entities (OIG LEIE) as well as Division of Professional Licensure (DPL), Bureau of Health Professions Licensure (DHPL), Board of Registration in Medicine (BORM) and Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS)

\(^6\) Please note that the current MOU will be updated for MA Responds participants, and units will be asked to sign or re-sign in the coming months.
State licensure boards for verification of professional licenses when a volunteer first registers, monthly, and prior to a deployment

- Automatically assigns emergency credential level in accordance with federal ESAR-VHP standards

4.2.2 Data Security

- All communications are encrypted
- Hosted in two Class A / Tier IV Data Center with redundant power and connectivity
- Meets the applicable security measures and is ISO 27001 compliant and SOC 2 compliant and certified

4.2.3 Notification

- Features an integrated two-way notification system that can be used to contact volunteers via phone (including extensions), SMS text, pager, fax, email, and TTD/TTY.
- While emails can be sent through the system at no cost, MDPH is charged for all other types of communication on a per use basis. DPH has pre-paid for a pool of minutes that can be requested by local units to use these features in an emergency (at no cost to the individual unit).
  - Due to budget limitations, DPH has decided only to use the pool of minutes for these features in emergency situations.
  - To request permission to use the non-email notification features of MA Responds, a unit administrator should contact the Statewide MRC Coordinator or Darryen Anderson at MDPH. Please refer to the Guidance for Using Notification Features of the MA Responds System, available here: https://bit.ly/MARespondsGuidance2020
- Unit administrators should also consult the MA Responds text/SMS instructions: http://bit.ly/MARespondsSMSInstructions2020

4.2.4 JUVARE CORES MESSAGING APP

- Offers a subset of the MA Responds messaging module in a flexible platform that you can easily use while you are on the go. The app, which is free to download in the app store, is fully integrated with MA Responds so that you can send and receive alerts and notifications on your mobile device, Android tablet and iPad.
  - To log into the CORES Messages app, you simply need to enter the MA Responds URL (www.maresponds.org) and the username and password that you use on the Web. Use the app to compose a message and send it via email, text message, and/or phone, compose and send a message based on an existing template, view responses from and send follow-up messages to groups of recipients and respond immediately to alerts and notifications that you receive. Please note that the app cannot be used for Mission Manager.
  - The CORES Messages app can be found here:
5 Volunteer Frequently Asked Questions

1. *How do I register?*
   - Registering is as simple as logging on to the web site and entering the information requested. When you log on to www.maresponds.org, select “Register Now.” You should have information about your applicable license and contact information available in order to complete the registration process. Once you have completed the minimum required information (items with *) to register an account you can return at a later date to complete your profile information such as licenses or trainings. Simply login to the system using the username and password you have created to complete anything you have not finished.

2. *How much personal information do I have to share with MA Responds?*
   - You will be asked to provide details about your contact information and personal information required for background checks. You will also be asked to provide licensing information, if appropriate. You may choose not to provide some information, but if you do so, the extent of your volunteer participation may be limited. You will also be asked some general questions about your health status in order to determine if there is any limitation to your ability to be deployed. Volunteers who do not meet the minimum background requirements will not be considered deployable.

3. *How often should I update my information?*
   - We request that you update your information any time you have a change in status. In addition, we recommend that you check your profile and update as needed every 6 months. Licensure information must be kept up to date or your volunteer participation may be limited.

4. *Who will have access to my personal data?*
   - You, your local volunteer program administrator and specified staff at the Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management at DPH will have access to the data you provide. Anyone with access to the data will be trained in proper security and privacy procedures. The last six digits of your Social Security Number will be encrypted upon registration and will be contained within a central,
secure database administered by DPH. Your information will ONLY be used to engage you in activities related to your local volunteer program or MA Responds, including recruitment for participation in a disaster drill or exercise, to provide you with program information or to request your assistance at the time of a large-scale disaster or public health emergency. DPH will not sell or otherwise provide information to anyone else without your consent.

5. **What is required for participation?**
   
   - You must first register with the program at [www.maresponds.org](http://www.maresponds.org). Your local program administrator for your area will contact you about their expectations for participation. You may be asked to attend a program orientation or other training to help prepare you. If and when activation becomes necessary, the local volunteer coordinators will contact affiliated volunteers to determine availability. All volunteers can accept or refuse a request for help. No matter what the extent of the need is, these are voluntary deployments and participants are not required to respond to a request.

   If you have questions about MA Responds, contact your local program administrator, or use the MA Responds website to contact us.

6. **Do I have to have any special training or expertise to volunteer?**
   
   - Your local program administrator will contact you for training opportunities, or any requirements for participation. Some programs will choose to wait until they need you and then provide just-in-time training to prepare you. When you are asked to volunteer, you will know what type of event it is, where you are being asked to respond, what will be expected from you, and what you need to know to help out and keep yourself safe.

7. **Can I get training in order to be a more effective volunteer?**
   
   - All volunteers are encouraged to seek training opportunities that will make them more effective if deployed to an emergency. Contact your local program administrator to see what trainings are recommended or required. The MA Responds program plans to develop a wide array of training opportunities. As opportunities are created, enrollees will be notified and those opportunities will be posted on this site.

8. **How can I ensure that my particular talents/training/expertise will be utilized?**
   
   - When you register, you will have the opportunity to enter information about your particular skills, expertise, certifications, etc. At the time of deployment, this information will be considered by those doing the deployment. Efforts will be made to match skills with needs. You can help ensure the proper match by
keeping the information about your own competencies and certifications up to date in the system.

9. What can I anticipate that I will be asked to do as part of MA Responds?
   - Assignments may be made by local or state volunteer coordinators and personnel (such as clinical staff) in receiving facilities. In making those assignments, licensure, training, experience, competencies, and certifications will all be considered. You can expect that you will be asked to perform tasks that are consistent with your level of licensure.

10. What if multiple programs contact me to volunteer during a crisis?
   - All volunteers have responsibilities that must be met before they can respond to a callout. Whether it is your family, your job, your local MRC, your local fire department, DMAT or other group or organization, you will need to decide for yourself what commitments you can make and what your preference is for deployment, which you will be able to designate in the system. Prior to accepting deployment, you should check with others and obtain any needed consent from your employer if deployment interferes with your work schedule.

11. How will I be notified that my services are required?
   - When you register you will enter information on the best way to contact you. If a deployment is required, this is the information that the system will use to contact you. Therefore, please be sure that the information you give is accurate and up to date. Any time you have any change in that information, please log on and update the information.

12. What if I am called and am unable or unwilling to help?
   - When you are called to volunteer, you can decide about your availability at that time. MA Responds volunteers are never under any obligation to participate. You always retain the right to decline for any reason. You can withdraw your application or discontinue your enrollment as a volunteer at any time by emailing the MA Responds program at MAResponds@mass.gov.

13. How far would I have to travel?
   - When you register, you will have the opportunity to indicate your willingness to travel. You will be asked if you are willing to volunteer locally, within the state, or even outside the state. These preferences will be considered when deployment decisions are being reached.
14. **Once I have registered, how should I prepare for deployment? What should I bring with me?**

- Your unit administrator will provide information about what they would expect you to do to prepare for deployment. In the event of a deployment you will likely receive an e-mail about deployment preparation. Additional information can be found in the MA Responds Orientation Course.

- In preparation for possible deployment please consider reviewing the MA Responds orientation curriculum which is designed to familiarize volunteers with the role of MA Responds volunteers and can be found here: [http://www.massmed.org/Patient-Care/Health-Topics/Emergency-Preparedness-and-Response/MA-Responds-Volunteer-Orientation-Curriculum/#.X0AiQNxKi00](http://www.massmed.org/Patient-Care/Health-Topics/Emergency-Preparedness-and-Response/MA-Responds-Volunteer-Orientation-Curriculum/#.X0AiQNxKi00)

15. **Is there any compensation for participating in MA Responds?**

- Volunteers will not be compensated for their service under MA Responds. Any person registered in the system as an employee of an entity that will respond to emergencies will be compensated according to the arrangement they have with that entity.

6 **CORI ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**


7 **EMAIL TEMPLATE TO VOLUNTEERS**

Dear [INSERT NAME OR INSERT TITLE (MRC Volunteer, etc…)],

We’re pleased to announce that the [insert unit name] will be transitioning to a new database system, **MA Responds**, in [INSERT MONTH]. MA Responds is an online registration system for health and non-health volunteers. This system is a partnership between the MDPH, local Medical Reserve Corps units, and other volunteer organizations in Massachusetts. MA Responds ([www.maresponds.org](http://www.maresponds.org)) is a centralized, secure web-based system that integrates local, regional, and statewide volunteer programs. The site is easy to use and will facilitate the ability to respond to health-related emergencies and events.

We encourage you to sign up and create a volunteer profile on MA Responds as soon as possible. Registering is as simple as logging on to the web site and entering the information
requested. When you log on to www.maresponds.org, select “Register Now.” You should have information about your applicable license and contact information available in order to complete the registration process. Once you have completed the minimum required information (items with *) to register an account you can return at a later date to complete your profile information such as licenses or trainings. Simply login to the system using the username and password you have created to complete anything you have not finished.

You will be asked to provide details about your contact information and personal information required for background checks. You will also be asked to provide licensing information, if appropriate. You may choose not to provide some information, but if you do so, the extent of your volunteer participation may be limited. You will also be asked some general questions about your health status in order to determine if there is any limitation to your ability to be deployed.

Access to your personal data is limited. Only you, your local volunteer program administrator and specified staff at the Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management at DPH will have access to the data you provide. Anyone with access to the data will be trained in proper security and privacy procedures. Your information will be contained within a central, secure database administered by DPH. Your information will ONLY be used to engage you in activities related to your local volunteer program or MA Responds, including recruitment for participation in a disaster drill or exercise, to provide you with program information or to request your assistance at the time of a large-scale disaster or public health emergency. DPH will not sell or otherwise provide information to anyone else without your consent.

In order to participate in future health related emergencies or events, all volunteers in MA Responds are required to have a criminal background check. In order to expedite this process, we have included a form authorizing a Massachusetts Criminal Offender Records Information (CORI) check. I know that you may have already filled out this form with us previously, but this form is specific to the MA Responds program and a Department of Public Health background check. Please complete this form and return to me by mail or in person as soon as possible.

If you have any questions about MA Responds, please contact [INSERT UNIT ADMIN NAME]. Thank you for being a valued volunteer.

Sincerely,

[INSERT UNIT ADMIN]

[INSERT UNIT ADMIN TITLE]

[INSERT UNIT ADMIN CONTACT INFORMATION]