

Office of Public Health Preparedness

Third Edition - 2016

PUBLIC HEALTH RESERVE CORPS
VOLUNTEER
HANDBOOK



An Affiliate of the National Medical Reserve Corps Program



This handbook is your reference guide for the South Carolina Public Health Reserve Corps (PHRC) program. It contains helpful information, policies and procedures that you will need to know to be an effective PHRC volunteer.

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Dear Public Health Reserve Corps Volunteer,

On behalf of the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control's Office of Public Health Preparedness, welcome and thank you for joining our Public Health Reserve Corps volunteer program.

In times of disaster, South Carolinians count on having a strong public health response system — one ready to care for the ill and injured and to help people recover. The Public Health Reserve Corps is an important resource for our public health emergency response system. We need trained volunteers to help with many public health tasks during emergencies and to participate in our community outreach and education efforts to better prepare our communities. As a Public Health Reserve Corps volunteer you will receive the necessary training to work as part of the public health response to restore healthy and safe conditions in communities affected by disaster and participate in non-emergency activities.

This handbook provides information that will help to maximize your volunteer experience. Please take the time to read through the handbook and refer back to it as questions arise. Always feel free to contact your regional Public Health Reserve Corps Volunteer Coordinator or the State Coordinator for additional information.

We truly appreciate your willingness to give your time and energy in service to South Carolinians and hope that you will find your experience in the Public Health Reserve Corps to be rewarding.

POINTS OF CONTACT

State PHRC Volunteer Coordinator
 2100 Bull Street
 Columbia, SC 29201
 (803) 898-4472

Upstate PHRC Unit

Abbeville, Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville,
 Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Oconee,
 Pickens, Spartanburg and Union counties

Contact Information:

220 McGee Road
 Anderson, South Carolina 29625
 (864) 231-1966

Midlands PHRC Unit

Aiken, Barnwell, Chester, Edgefield, Fairfield,
 Kershaw, Lancaster, Lexington, Newberry,
 Richland, Saluda and York counties

Contact Information:

2000 Hampton Street
 Columbia, South Carolina 29204
 (803) 576-2694

Pee Dee PHRC Unit

Chesterfield, Clarendon, Darlington, Dillon,
 Florence, Georgetown, Horry, Lee, Marion,
 Marlboro, Sumter and Williamsburg counties

Contact Information:

105 North Magnolia Street
 Sumter, South Carolina 29150
 (803) 934-2898

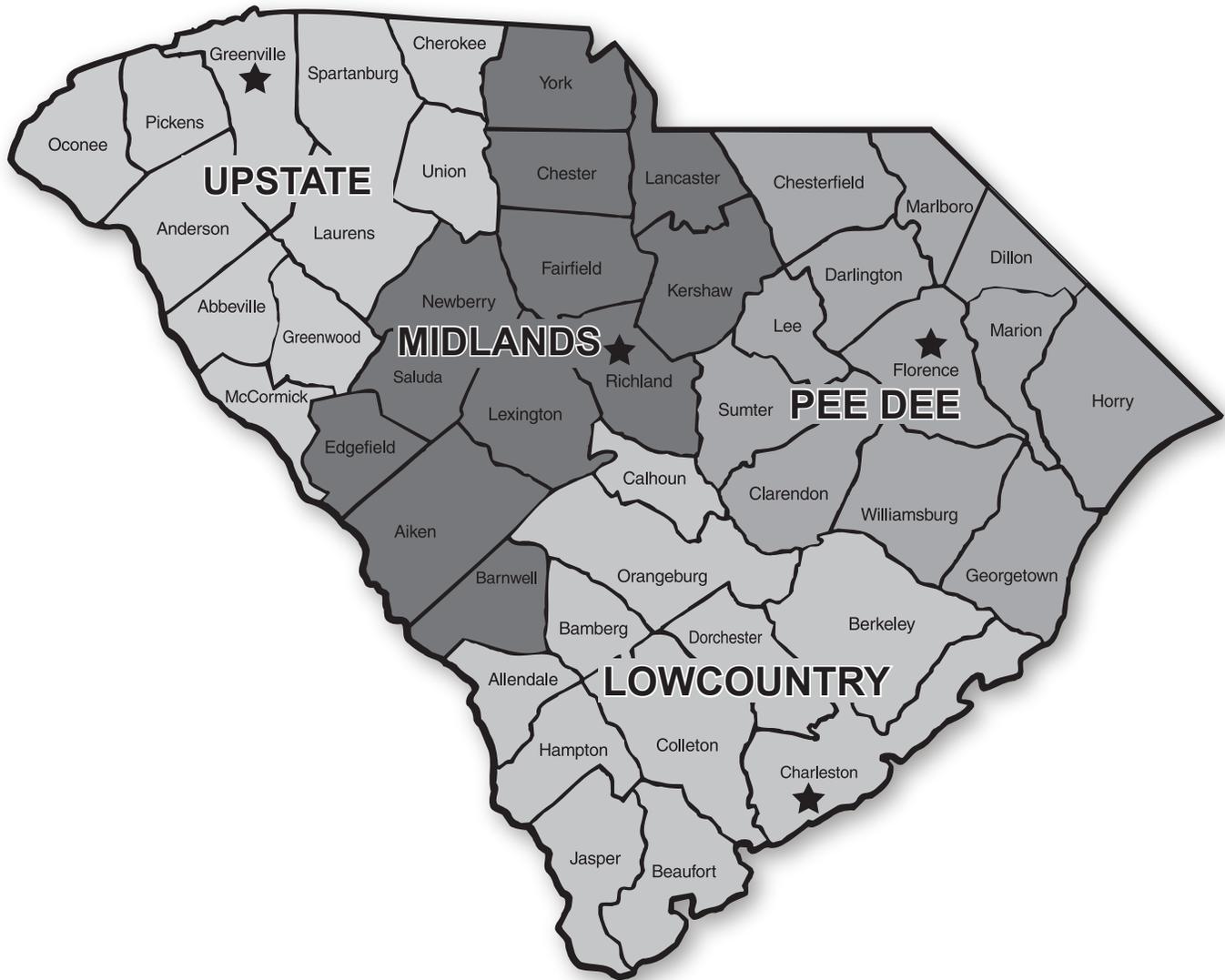
Lowcountry PHRC Unit

Allendale, Bamberg, Beaufort, Berkeley,
 Calhoun, Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester,
 Hampton, Jasper and Orangeburg counties

Contact Information:

4050 Bridge View Drive, Suite 600
 North Charleston, South Carolina 29405
 (843) 953-0064

DHEC REGIONS



GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC)

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) is the state agency charged with protecting public health, coastal resources and the state's land, air and water quality as authorized under multiple state and federal laws. Approximately 3,800 full-time DHEC employees around the state provide vital health care and other direct services, monitor pollution, coordinate disease control, carry out the agency's inspection and regulatory responsibilities, respond to environmental emergencies, and protect public health and the environment in numerous other ways.

DHEC Office of Public Health Preparedness (OPHP)

The Office of Public Health Preparedness works closely with local government agencies, hospitals, health care providers, community organizations and leaders, community and state emergency managers, to prepare for the unexpected, including pandemic influenza, terrorist attacks, natural disasters and any other emergency that could impact the health of South Carolinians. OPHP serves as the liaison between DHEC, FEMA, SC Emergency Management Division and county emergency managers. Staff are skilled at responding to a broad range of emergencies.

Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR)

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response was created under the Pandemic and All Hazards Preparedness Act in the wake of Hurricane Katrina to lead the nation in preventing, preparing for and responding to the adverse health effects of public health emergencies and disasters. ASPR focuses on preparedness planning and response; building federal emergency medical operational capabilities; countermeasures research, advance development and procurement; and grants to strengthen the capabilities of hospitals and health care systems in public health emergencies and medical disasters. The office provides federal support, including medical professionals through ASPR's National Disaster Medical System, to augment state and local capabilities during an emergency or disaster.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is a part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). FEMA's primary mission is to reduce the loss of life and property and protect the Nation from all hazards, including natural disasters, acts of terrorism and other man-made disasters, by leading and supporting the Nation in a risk-based, comprehensive emergency management system of preparedness, protection, response, recovery and mitigation.

Incident Command System (ICS)

The Incident Command System (ICS) is a management system designed to enable effective and efficient domestic incident management by integrating a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures and communications operating within a common organizational structure. ICS is normally structured to facilitate activities in seven major functional areas: command, operations, planning, logistics, intelligence, investigations, and finance and administration. It is a fundamental form of management, with the purpose of enabling incident managers to identify the key concerns associated with the incident—often under urgent conditions—without sacrificing attention to any component of the command system. ICS is based upon a flexible, scalable response organization providing a common framework within which people can work together effectively. These people may be drawn from multiple agencies that do not routinely work together, and ICS is designed to give standard response and operation procedures to reduce the problems and potential for miscommunication on such incidents. ICS has been summarized as a “first-on-scene” structure, where the first responder on a scene has charge of the scene until the incident is resolved or the initial responder transitions incident command to an arriving, more-qualified individual.

National Incident Management System (NIMS)

While most emergency situations are handled locally, when there is a major incident help may be needed from other jurisdictions, the state and the federal government. The National Incident Management System (NIMS) was developed so responders from different jurisdictions and disciplines can more effectively respond to natural disasters and emergencies, including acts of terrorism. NIMS benefits include a unified approach to incident management, standard command and management structures; and emphasis on preparedness, mutual aid and resource management.

NATIONAL MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS PROGRAM

The national Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Program was founded in 2002 as a result of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and the Anthrax incidents that occurred later that fall. In 2002, during his State of Union Address, President Bush called on all Americans to volunteer in their communities. As a result, the Pandemic All-Hazards Preparedness Act in 2006 authorized into law the Medical Reserve Corps national program.

The MRC Program supports local efforts to establish, implement and sustain MRC units across the nation. The MRC Program is located in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) under the administration of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM).

The MRC Program and ASPR are working together to build greater awareness of the MRC network. Medical Reserve Corps volunteers are fully engaged in improving the overall wellness of individuals and their communities in an effort to build resilience and reduce disaster risk. It is through their service that gaps in public health are filled, capabilities are strengthened, responses are quicker and recovery is smoother.

The South Carolina Public Health Reserve Corps is an affiliate of the national MRC Program. Each Public Health Reserve Corps unit is registered with the national MRC Program. For more information, go to: <https://mrc.hhs.gov/HomePage>.

SOUTH CAROLINA PUBLIC HEALTH RESERVE CORPS

The South Carolina Public Health Reserve Corps (PHRC) is under the administration of the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control.

Founded in 2006, the South Carolina PHRC units are locally-based, region-wide personnel resources whose purpose is to augment, assist and support the existing medical and public health systems during disasters or public health emergencies.

The PHRC consists of medical, behavioral health and non-medical volunteers who can be called upon to assist the community in the event of a disaster or in non-emergency situations (i.e. public health initiatives, community health outreach programs, etc.).

As an “all-hazards” resource, PHRC volunteers may be utilized in large-scale, complex emergencies involving multiple jurisdictions and interagency operations or in smaller incidents involving a single jurisdiction or agency. PHRC volunteers may be offered opportunities to volunteer with area hospitals and other health care facilities and community partners.

Vision

South Carolina PHRC supports DHEC’s core values and vision of “Healthy People living in Healthy Communities.”

Core Values

Pursuing Excellence: We are steadfast in our commitment to the highest achievable standards of quality and professionalism in our pursuit of healthy people living in healthy communities.

Inspiring Innovation: We encourage and empower our teams to find creative solutions to promote and protect the health of the public and the environment.

Promoting Teamwork: We foster an inclusive and collaborative environment, valuing the diversity of thoughts, experience and expertise of every team member, our stakeholders and our communities.

Embracing Service: We embrace our responsibility to reliably serve our communities, our customers and each other in a respectful manner, relying upon clear and uncompromised commitments to integrity, trust, dependability and responsiveness.

Mission

The South Carolina Public Health Reserve Corps (PHRC) program provides an opportunity for volunteers like you who have a medical, behavioral health and non-medical background to assist communities during disasters and non-emergency public health activities.

As a PHRC Volunteer, You May Be Asked to Support:

- The administration of life-saving medications at a Point of Dispensing (POD);
- Operations of a Special Medical Needs Shelter (SMNS);
- The emotional needs of disaster survivors;
- Medical surge operations;
- Community education and outreach;
- Mass vaccination clinics;
- Other community partners in response efforts.

PHRC PROGRAM ORGANIZATION AND COMPOSITION

STATE LEVEL:

Office of Public Health Preparedness Director

The OPHP Director is a DHEC employee who directs the DHEC Office of Public Health Preparedness and serves as a liaison at other agencies and organizations.

State Volunteer Coordinator

The State Volunteer Coordinator is a DHEC employee who provides overall state-level leadership, program development and operations of the PHRC volunteer program. The State Volunteer Coordinator role is intended to enhance coordination between local PHRC units, the state and the National MRC Program Office.

REGIONAL LEVEL:

Public Health Preparedness (PHP) Director

The PHP Director is a DHEC employee who supervises the PHRC Regional Volunteer Coordinator and the operations of the local PHRC unit.

Regional PHRC Volunteer Coordinator

The Regional PHRC Volunteer Coordinator is a DHEC employee who is responsible for the overall coordination, development and operations of the local PHRC unit.

South Carolina MRC units:

Upstate PHRC Unit

Abbeville, Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Oconee, Pickens, Spartanburg and Union Counties.

Midlands PHRC Unit

Aiken, Barnwell, Chester, Edgefield, Fairfield, Kershaw, Lancaster, Lexington, Newberry, Richland, Saluda and York counties.

Pee Dee PHRC Unit

Chesterfield, Clarendon, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Georgetown, Horry, Lee, Marion, Marlboro, Sumter and Williamsburg counties.

Lowcountry PHRC Unit

Allendale, Bamberg, Beaufort, Berkeley, Calhoun, Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester, Hampton, Jasper and Orangeburg counties.

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

Selection Criteria

Once registered into the program, you agree to be available to respond to significant events. You may work under stressful situations and should be available to respond with minimal notice. Requirements include:

- Be a citizen of United States or legal/registered alien;
- Have a current mailing address and contact information;
- Have a current professional license, if applicable;
- Agree to medical screening and/or receive vaccination/inoculation/medication if required;
- Agree to a State Law Enforcement Division (SLED) background check;
- High school students under the age of 18 may participate with parental approval;
- Licensed PHRC medical and behavioral health professionals must possess an active/ unencumbered state license through the appropriate state licensing authority.

South Carolina Emergency Registry of Volunteers (SCSERV)

www.scserv.gov

SCSERV is a web-based volunteer registration system designed and administered by the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control. SCSERV integrates local, regional and statewide volunteer programs to assist emergency response and public safety organizations during a disaster. It is part of a national initiative to coordinate and mobilize volunteers to respond to all types of emergencies.

Updating Profiles

You are required to periodically update your profile in SCSERV. Reminder notifications will be emailed to you on an annual basis by the unit's PHRC Volunteer Coordinator.

Updated information will enable DHEC to stay in touch and be able to successfully contact you for placement during an activation.

Updating a Professional License

If you have a professional license, you should update license information each time your license is renewed. SCSERV does not automatically update this information in the database.

Health Requirements

You are required to complete the Medical History section located in SCSERV. Your medical history will be reviewed by a DHEC staff member in order to ensure that you have the necessary immunizations and protections needed to participate. Immunization requirements are based on the type of public health response and the risk level associated with the particular job function you will be performing.

Identification

A. Badges

You will be issued an official, photo-identification badge upon completion of program requirements by the regional PHRC Volunteers Coordinators. The badges will:

- » Identify you as a member of a recognized volunteer organization;
- » Provide you with access to the worksites to support the emergency response;
- » Remain the sole property of DHEC and shall be returned upon your resignation or termination;
- » Expire and be re-issued after two years.

B. Vests

You may be provided with a PHRC/MRC vest when participating in DHEC activities.

Volunteer Resignation

Should you decide to no longer be a part of the PHRC program, notice of such a decision should be communicated as soon as possible to the regional PHRC Volunteer Coordinator. You must turn in identification badges, orientation manuals, vests, and other DHEC property at the time of resignation. You should also delete your profile from SCSERV at www.scserv.gov.

Reasons for Dismissal

Your membership status will be terminated if you:

- Self-deploy;
- Violate agency policies, privacy issues and/or safety issues;
- Misrepresent yourself during or after the application process;
- Commit the following offenses: sexual offenses, robbery, arson, burglary or related offenses;
- Exceed the limits of your knowledge/skill/authority as defined by your professional license or as indicated by the agency scope of practice.

Legal Protections

DHEC provides liability coverage to you while you are exclusively acting on behalf of DHEC and within your scope as a PHRC volunteer with DHEC. This coverage is provided in accordance with DHEC's automobile liability policy, tort liability policy and professional liability policy, and in accordance with the Government Volunteers Act, S.C. Code Section 8-25-10, et seq., and the Emergency Health Powers Act, S.C. Code Section 44-4-100, et seq., as applicable during your volunteer period. Acts of gross negligence or willful misconduct are specifically excluded from liability coverage. Because you are not a DHEC employee Workers Compensation insurance will not be provided. Furthermore, DHEC does not provide any health or accident insurance.

Volunteer Agreement

The SC Department of Health and Environmental Control Volunteer Agreement Forms are utilized to provide you as a PHRC volunteer with Liability Protections, Scope of Services, Time of Performance and Terms and Conditions when activated or deployed. You must sign the Volunteer agreements prior to activation/deployment.

Safety and Injuries

Your safety and injury prevention is critical. DHEC follows Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines for your safety (per task). The agency makes every effort to assign tasks that do not put you at risk. If you are assigned a task you feel exceeds your physical or emotional capabilities and/or puts you at risk of injury or harm, you should notify your supervisor. It is your responsibility to report any incidents, accidents or injuries promptly to supervisors.

PUBLIC HEALTH RESERVE CORPS OPERATIONS

Orientation, Training and Exercises

As a PHRC volunteer, you will be provided the education, training and supervision necessary to complete assigned roles. DHEC offers online training through the eLearning system and classroom courses at no or minimal costs to you. Approximately 14 hours of on-line training is required. Annual refresher training may be required for some courses. Additional just-in-time training may also be required prior to deployment.

After completing on-line courses for FEMA, you should submit copies of the training certificates to the Regional Volunteer Coordinator.

Required

You must complete all required training within six months of acceptance into the PHRC. Failure to complete required training will result in dismissal from the PHRC program.

1. ICS 100;
2. ICS 700;
3. Psychological First Aid;
4. DHEC's Role in Emergency Operations – An Introduction;
5. HIPAA 202;
6. HIPAA Annual Refresher;
7. OSHA Hazardous Communication Standard (current version);

8. Agency Employee Safety Section 5: General Occupational Safety (current version);
9. Training based on position descriptions and Job Action Sheets (JAS).

Optional

DHEC supports the national MRC Program's Core Competencies. The Core Competency Matrix can be located at <https://mrc.hhs.gov/HomePage>.

National Incident Management System (NIMS)

The adoption of NIMS by the state of South Carolina ensures that all agencies supporting emergency events will use common structures, terminology and procedures. As a PHRC volunteer, you will be integrated into this common standard of operations.

Exercises

You may have the opportunity to participate in exercises and drills conducted at the regional and state level.

Types of Activations

Medical Countermeasure Operations

During emergencies such as terrorist attacks or influenza outbreaks, the public health system's ability to save lives could depend on dispensing medical countermeasures such as antibiotics and vaccines to a large number of people in a short amount of time. Medical Countermeasure Operations includes a variety of public health response activities such as assisting with Points of Dispensing (PODs). You may be asked to assist in operations such as administrative support, registration, security, traffic control, POD flow, logistics, runners, greeters, interpreters, data entry, screening, dispensing/vaccinator and behavioral health support.

Special Medical Needs Shelters (SMNS)

Special medical needs shelters provide an environment that can sustain persons who have medical needs but whose conditions are stable enough that they do not require in-patient facility care (hospital). Shelterees usually have a caregiver who arrives and attends to their medical needs just as they would at the patient's home. If you are working in a SMNS, you may assist in operations such as triage, registration, assessment, behavioral health support and other types of administrative support.

Disaster Behavioral Health Teams

The Disaster Behavioral Health Team is a DHEC resource that can be utilized to assess the behavioral health needs of individuals, families, communities, staff and first responders. As part of an overall state DHEC asset, a Disaster Behavioral Health Team will be formed in each of the four DHEC regions and led by the Regional Social Work Lead or their designee. Whether you are licensed or unlicensed, you may serve in the Disaster Behavioral Health role once you have completed required training, including Psychological First Aid.

Partnering Organization Deployment

You may receive opportunities to participate with community partners, such as a healthcare facility, hospital or the American Red Cross. Activation/deployment details will be provided by the receiving community partner.

If you are working under the auspices of a partnering organization (health care facility, hospital, American Red Cross, etc.), you will not sign the DHEC volunteer agreement, and will not be covered under DHEC's liability coverage. The requesting organization will be responsible for providing you with legal protections and assuming administrative responsibility.

Non-emergency Support

You may have the opportunity to participate in non-emergency services and day-to-day public health operations such as:

- Seasonal Flu Clinics;
- Immunization Campaigns;
- Community Education and outreach;
- Recruitment activities;
- Special projects;
- Logistics Support.

Activation/Deployment Procedures

The regional PHRC Volunteer Coordinator will generate a list of needed volunteers and contact the volunteers by phone or email. If you are contacted for activation/deployment, the regional Volunteer Coordinator will provide you with the following information:

- The nature and scope of the event;
- The location of the event or staging area;
- The anticipated activities to be performed;
- Specific skills needed.

Depending on the incident, you may receive just-in-time training after checking in with your designated supervisor.

Demobilization

You will receive demobilization instructions from your designated supervisor.

You will be offered a voluntary post-deployment debriefing to address any emotional distress brought on by the activation/deployment.

POLICIES

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

As a PHRC volunteer, you are a valuable resource to DHEC and the local community. You will be extended the right to be given meaningful assignments, the right to be treated as an equal co-worker, the right to effective supervision, the right to full involvement and participation and the right to recognition for work done. In return, you shall agree to actively perform your duties to the best of your ability and to remain loyal to the mission of DHEC and the PHRC.

Unlawful Harassment and Discrimination

Any act of harassment by you, including sexual and discriminatory harassment, is strictly prohibited and subjects you to dismissal. Any act of harassment, including sexual and discriminatory harassment, against you is strictly prohibited and should be reported immediately to your supervisor. All reports of harassment, either verbal or in writing, will be investigated in a timely manner. Retaliation against you or any other volunteer who reports a concern about harassment is strictly prohibited.

Complaints

All complaints of harassment and other grievances should be reported to your designated supervisor. If the issue is not resolved, you should contact the next person in the chain of command.

Drug-Free Environment

You must observe DHEC's commitment of a drug-free environment. It is unlawful to manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess or use an illegal controlled substance. DHEC prohibits such action by employees or volunteers while performing their tasks and activities. You must abstain from transport, storage or consumption of alcoholic beverages or illegal substances when performing volunteer duties. Violation of the policy may result in your removal from your position within the PHRC.

Smoking Policy

In accordance with our commitment to promoting and protecting public health, all DHEC offices and grounds are 100 percent smoke- and tobacco-free campuses. The use of tobacco and smoking products is discouraged while deployed, and is prohibited on all DHEC property. If deployed with a community partner you must adhere to the receiving organization/facilities tobacco policies.

Confidentiality

You are required to sign a confidentiality agreement and are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all medical, proprietary or privileged information to which you have access while serving as a PHRC volunteer. This includes information concerning personnel matters, members of the community or public-related health business.

Media Contact

DHEC has protocols in place and designated staff trained to handle any situation involving the media. You should never offer any information or comments to reporters or members of the news media. Always refer the media to a supervisor or DHEC's Media Relations office. Visit www.scdhec.gov/Agency/NewsReleases/MRContacts to view contact information for DHEC's Media Relations team.

RESOURCE DIRECTORY

SCDHEC: www.scdhec.gov

SCSERV: www.scerv.org

eLearning: <https://gm1.geolearning.com/geonext/sscdhec/login.geo>

Medical Reserve Corps national program home page: <https://mrc.hhs.gov/HomePage>

SC Emergency Management: www.scemd.org

National Child Traumatic Stress Network: Psychological First Aid Online Training: <http://learn.nctsn.org/course/index.php?categoryid=11>

National Child Traumatic Stress Network: www.nctsn.org

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMSHA):

Disaster Distress Helpline: www.disasterdistress.samhsa.gov

Federal Emergency Management Agency: Whole Community: www.fema.gov/whole-community

US Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response At Risk, Behavioral Health, Community Resilience (ABC): www.phe.gov/abc

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Public Health Preparedness: www.cdc.gov/phpr

CDC Strategic National Stockpile: www.cdc.gov/phpr/stockpile/stockpile.htm

World Health Organization (WHO): www.who.int

National Hurricane Center: www.nhc.noaa.gov

Ready: www.ready.gov

American Red Cross: www.RedCross.org

