



# West Texas Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer Handbook



## Mission Statement

The mission of the West Texas Medical Reserve Corps is to enhance the regional response capabilities in the event of an emergency, disaster or disease outbreak by providing a coordinated response using locally recruited medical, behavioral health, public health, and health support volunteers. The Medical Reserve Corps volunteers will also work to improve the overall health, preparedness, and well-being of the region.

### Goals

- Identify, train, and credential volunteers to assist in response to a disaster, including natural and man-made events (including bio-terrorism).
- Utilize the MRC members to educate the community on preparedness for both terrorist and naturally occurring events (natural disaster, pandemic flu, etc.)
- Identify opportunities for members to assist in response activities for local emergencies or events.
- Promote activities which support the Surgeon General's priorities.

### Geographic Area

The geographic areas to be covered include the counties of El Paso, Hudspeth, and Culberson Counties in Texas. A collaborative working relationship with the Southern New Mexico Medical Reserve Corps is also planned. Future linkages to Juarez, Mexico will be explored as a regional approach. The geographic area includes a large metropolitan border community as well as outlying rural areas. Juarez, Mexico is located just across the river.

# Volunteer Handbook Instructions

1. Please read and keep the Handbook. Additional documents/updates will be provided in the future.
2. Feel free to make notes and jot down questions...this is your copy.
3. Refer to the list of volunteer roles on page 5 and note those that interest you.
4. Review training requirements on page 6 and complete your training as soon as possible – additional training announcements are made via e-mail or will be posted on the web at [www.westtexasmrc.org](http://www.westtexasmrc.org).
5. Familiarize yourself with the “*Volunteer Code of Conduct*” in this handbook.
6. Your copies of agreements signed during Orientation are included. Keep these as a part of your handbook for easy reference.
  - HIPPA Confidentiality Agreement
  - Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement
  - Release of Confidential Information
  - Volunteer Risk and Protection from Legal Liability
  - Volunteer Statement/Agreement



## ***DRESS CODE***

*Dress code for the employees / volunteers of the MRC shall be in accordance with appropriate working conditions in shelter operations or other emergency situations. Volunteer clothing should cover the body. Wear shoes that are comfortable and safe, if dealing directly with animals wear appropriate protection to avoid bites and scratches inflicted by fractious or unruly animals. Medical Scrubs may be worn, if not, please wear your MRC t-shirt. If you do not have an MRC t-shirt please request one.*



## **Background**

*The West Texas Medical Reserve Corps (West Texas MRC) has been approved and officially registered (November 9, 2006) through the Medical Reserve Corps Program, Office of the Surgeon General. It is also recognized as part of the White House's USA Freedom Corps initiative and the Department of Homeland Security's Citizen Corps. Although registered as the West Texas MRC, the long-term intent of the working group is to form a collaborative with the Southern New Mexico Medical Reserve Corps.*

## **Rationale for Establishment of the West Texas Medical Reserve Corps**

During the hurricane events of 2005, El Paso received evacuees from both Katrina and Rita and the "Storm 2006" flooding in El Paso and Southern New Mexico. The need to address the region's needs during such events became apparent. If our community is affected by a bioterrorist attack or a pandemic outbreak affecting hundreds to thousands of people, a reserve corps would help address those medical needs which would overwhelm our traditional ability to respond and provide mass care.

## **Organizational History:**

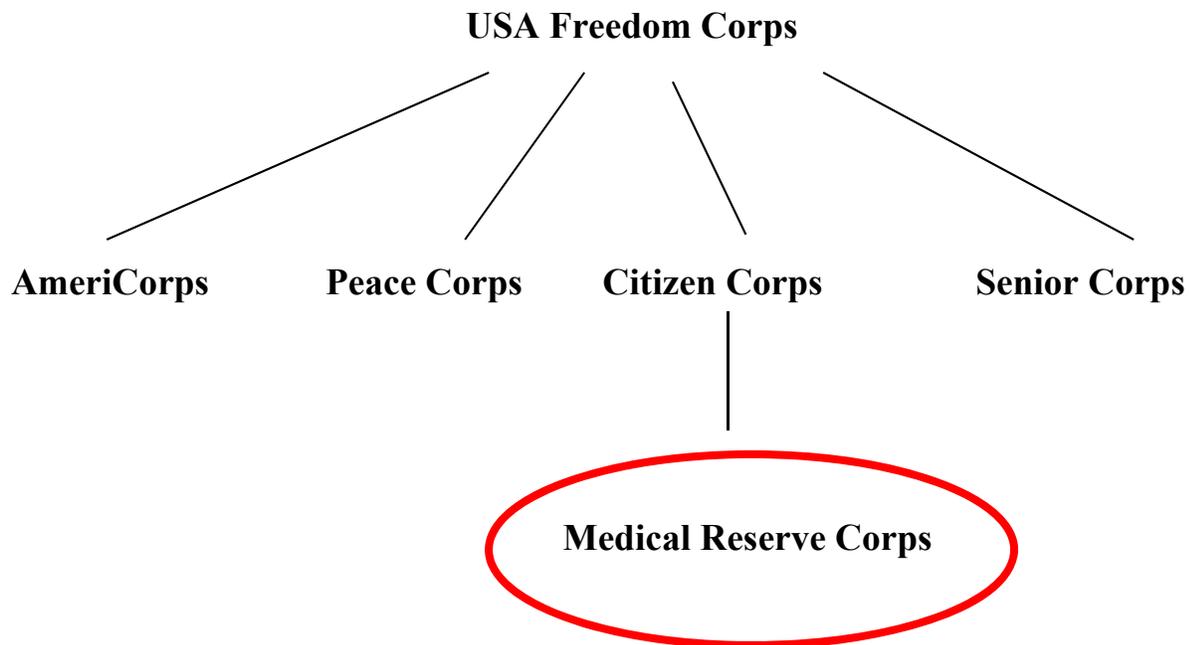
- Approval of unit in November, 2006.
- Information flyers and interests sheets are being distributed.
- Meetings with governmental, community, and professional agencies/organizations are being conducted. The purpose of these meetings is to generate support and future partnerships as the West Texas Medical Reserve Corps develops.
- Steering committee meetings to develop guidelines and procedures are being held.
- Members are participating in Region VI Medical Reserve Corps Program activities (i.e. conference calls).
- Received permission to utilize National MRC logo.
- Web site developed at [www.westtexasmrc.org](http://www.westtexasmrc.org)
- MRC Unit information posted on national web site at [www.medicalreservecorps.gov](http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov)
- In collaboration with United Way and Far West Texas & Southern New Mexico Regional Advisory Council on Trauma received grant from AmeriCorps / Ready for Disasters Preparedness Grant. This supplies two AmeriCorps workers, one Community Outreach Worker and one Information Specialist.
- Received grants from National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO)
- MRC Coordinator attended National Leadership and Training conferences each year.



## What is the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)?

Medical Reserve Corps, or MRC, is a specialized component of Citizen Corps, a national network of volunteers dedicated to ensuring hometown security. Citizen Corps, along with AmeriCorps, Senior Corps and the Peace Corps are all part of the President's Freedom Corps, which promotes volunteerism and service throughout the nation.

Medical Reserve Corps serves under the office of the United States Surgeon General. The organization was unveiled during President Bush's 2002 State of the Union Address, in which he asked all Americans to volunteer in support of their country. The primary role of the local MRC unit is to supplement the community emergency response systems already in place.



To learn more about these organizations please the following sites:

**USA Freedom Corps:** [www.usafreedomcorps.gov](http://www.usafreedomcorps.gov)

**AmeriCorps:** [www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org)

**Peace Corps:** [www.peacecorps.gov](http://www.peacecorps.gov)

**Citizen Corps:** [www.citizencorps.gov](http://www.citizencorps.gov)

**Senior Corps:** [www.seniorcorps.org](http://www.seniorcorps.org)

**Medical Reserve Corps:** [www.medicalreservecorps.gov](http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov)



## Role You Play In the MRC

While the services performed by Medical Reserve Corps units around the nation may differ, many have agreed to support critical Homeland Security issues. Ensure medical surge capacity which is the ability to meet the need for an abundance of medical workers during public health emergencies, and assisting with medical special needs sheltering during an event.

## Special Needs Shelters

Special Needs Shelters are shelters designed to care for people with special needs, such as:

- People with health/medical conditions requiring nursing observation, assessment and maintenance;
- People with chronic conditions requiring assistance with activities of daily living (ADL) and do not require hospitalization;
- People with regular need for medications and/or regular vital sign readings, and who are unable to do so without regular nursing assistance.

The intent of the shelter is to provide, to the extent possible under emergency conditions, an environment in which the current level of health of the shelterees with special needs can be sustained within the capabilities of available resources. Persons eligible for the Special Needs Shelter have physical conditions that require limited medical/nursing oversight that cannot be accommodated or provided for in a general population shelter

The West Texas Medical Reserve Corps needs volunteers to fill these responsibilities. Volunteers with medical *and* non-medical backgrounds are encouraged to submit applications. Below are listed volunteer opportunities for individuals who join the West Texas MRC.

### Possible Volunteer Roles at an Emergency Point of Delivery (POD) Site or Shelter Site

Any Manager role may be supported by a Coordinator role and a Technician role.

Any Coordinator role may be supported by a Technician role.

#### Medical Roles:

- |                      |  |                             |
|----------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| ■ Clinic Manager     | ■ Screening / Dispensing Technician    | ■ Crisis Manager Technician |
| ■ Triage Coordinator | ■ Dispensing / Vaccination Coordinator | ■ Education Technician      |
| ■ Triage Technician  | ■ Physician Consultant                 | ■ Direct Patient Care       |

#### Non-Medical Roles:

- |                       |                               |                          |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ■ POD Director        | ■ Documentation Coordinator   | ■ Administration Manager |
| ■ Safety Manager      | ■ Translation Technician      | ■ Runner                 |
| ■ Facilities Manager  | ■ Communications / IT Manager | ■ Crowd Control          |
| ■ Building Technician | ■ Security                    | ■ Inventory Control      |



**Volunteer Orientation** – introduces volunteers to the West Texas MRC, the local disaster response plan, and other community resources.

### **Credentialing**

**Active healthcare professionals** are required to provide license number(s), registration, and/or appropriate certification/credentialing information. In the event of an emergency, volunteers will be utilized commensurate with their training and skills. If you do not provide medically acceptable credentials, you will be assigned as a **non-medical volunteer**. Currently enrolled **students** must be supervised by a faculty member in order to provide direct patient care. Students not supervised will be assigned as a non-medical volunteer.

Volunteers are requested to register at [www.mrc.train.org](http://www.mrc.train.org). This nationally supported website (developed along with the Public Health Foundation) will ask for some personal and professional data. Please make sure to select the organization as West Texas MRC! If you have already completed any disaster-preparedness training, you may enter it into your portfolio. The site provides for a method for tracking training completed through this website as well as adding training completed elsewhere. Use of this site will allow future communication as well as assist our Unit in tracking education. (Note: If already a member of TX TRAIN, there is no need to create a second account. Select “My Account”. Select the “Groups” tab and select “Edit”).

1. Sign up for the mandatory training courses through MRCTrain ([www.mrc.train.org](http://www.mrc.train.org)): **IS100 Introduction to the Incident Command System** and **IS700 National Incident Management System** if you have not already completed these through another agency. These are FREE courses prepared by FEMA. And you will receive a certificate of completion. Note: There are many, many other very good courses available through this site---free! If you register for the courses through the MRCTrain website, it will track your enrollment and completion for you (and for the West Texas MRC!)
2. If you have not yet done so, check out the following websites for other information:
  - [www.redcross.org/flash/course01.v01](http://www.redcross.org/flash/course01.v01) and review the ARC Introduction to Disaster course to assist in personal and family disaster planning.
  - <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is22.asp> Complete: “Are you Ready? An In-Depth Guide to Citizen Preparedness.”
  - [www.medicalreservecorps.gov](http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov) for multiple resources. Specifically review the April 2007 Medical Reserve Corps Core Competencies.
  - [www.citizencorps.gov/cert](http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert) for information about the Citizen corps program

In addition to the orientation, continuing education courses for all interested MRC volunteers will be offered throughout the year. These courses may include, but are not limited to:

- IS 100 Introduction to the Incident Command System
- IS 700 National Incident Management System
- Basic Disaster Life Support (BDLS)
- Core Disaster Life Support (CDLS)
- Satellite training sessions offered by national and state emergency preparation agencies
- Web-based emergency preparedness training courses
- Other emergency training courses offered in West Texas by local, regional or state organizations.



## Volunteer Code of Conduct

### Ethics

#### A volunteer shall:

- Maintain high standards of moral and ethical conduct that includes self-control and responsible behavior. A volunteer must consider the physical and emotional well-being of others and display courtesy and good manners.
- Avoid profane and abusive language and disruptive behavior including behavior that is dangerous to self and others including acts of violence, physical or sexual abuse, or harassment.
- Abstain from transport, storage and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages and/or illegal substances when performing volunteer duties.
- Abstain from illegal activity.
- Avoid conflict of interest situations and refrain from actions that may be so perceived. Volunteers should disclose all potential or actual conflicts of interest as they arise.
- Abstain from the use of audio or video recording equipment, unless authorized, including cameras.
- Report medications taken prior to or during volunteer duties to the MRC Coordinator, or designee.
- Report employment and or address changes to the MRC Coordinator.
- Acknowledge that volunteers can be dismissed or refused acceptance by the West Texas MRC for any reason deemed appropriate by the MRC Director.

### Safety

#### A volunteer shall:

- Put safety first in all volunteer activities.
- Respect and use all equipment appropriately.
- Follow all procedures to the best of one's ability at all times.
- Promote healthy and safe work practices.
- Recognize and congratulate those volunteers who follow safe and caring practices.
- Take care of self and others.
- Report all injuries, illnesses and accidents to the appropriate staff member.
- Recognize that training is fundamental to everyone's safety.
- Participation is limited to those age 18 and above

### Respect

#### A volunteer shall:

- Respect the cultures, beliefs, opinions and decisions of others although he/she may not always agree.
- Treat each other with courtesy, sensitivity, tact, consideration and humility.
- Accept the chain of command and respect each other regardless of position.



# West Texas Medical Reserve Corps



## HIPPA CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

*The following information explains and governs your use and exposure to confidential health information as a volunteer for the West Texas Medical Reserve Corps. If you have any questions regarding this information you should consult the person supervising your volunteer work or the Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator.*

As used herein, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

1. **“Confidential Information”** includes any information, regardless of the manner in which is communicated or maintained (e.g., oral, paper, electronic), received by the West Texas Medical Reserve Corps, or any of its agents that falls into one or more of the following categories:
  - a. **Protected Health Information:** Information relating to the past, present, or future physical or mental health or condition of an individual; the provision of health care to an individual; or the past, present or future payment for the provision of health care to an individual. Protected health information includes demographic information, e.g., address, telephone number, employer, date of birth, next of kin, identification numbers.
  - b. **Personnel Information:** Information relating to a person’s status as a member of the West Texas Medical Reserve Corps workforce, including but not limited to compensation, employment records, accommodations, performance reviews, and disciplinary actions.
  - c. **Business Operations Information:** Information relating to the West Texas Medical Reserve Corps operations, including but not limited to financial and statistical records, strategic plans, internal reports, memos, contracts, pricing, staffing levels, supplier information, remote site information, peer review information, communications, proprietary computer programs, source code, and proprietary technology.
  - d. **Third Party Information:** Information belonging to a third party utilized by the West Texas Medical Reserve Corps for limited purposes pursuant to an agreement with the third party, including, but not limited to computer programs, client and vendor proprietary information source code, and proprietary technology.
2. **“Receive,” “Receiving,” and “Receipt”** means, with respect to Confidential Information, to come into possession, custody, or control; to perceive; to create; to gain the ability to come into possession, custody, or control; or to gain the ability to perceive Confidential Information in whatever form (oral, visual, written, electronic, or otherwise).
3. **“Use”** means, with respect to confidential information, accessing, reviewing, employing, applying, utilizing or analyzing such information, or sharing or discussing such information with other members of the West Texas Medical Reserve Corps workforce.
4. **“Disclose”** means, with respect to confidential information, release, and transfer, provision of access to, or divulging in any other manner such information to a person or entity who is not a member of the West Texas Medical Reserve Corps workforce.
5. **“Computer Systems”** includes computer files, computer hard drives, local area network, wide area network, mainframe, electronic mail, internet access, and intranet access, electronic medical records, and electronic order entry.

In performing your volunteer duties, you may receive or create Confidential Information. As a condition of and in consideration of your receipt of Confidential Information, you agree to the following:

1. You understand that you have no right or ownership interest in any Confidential Information which you may receive. West Texas Medical Reserve Corps may, at any time and for any reason, revoke your password, access code, or any other authorization you may have that allows you to receive Confidential Information in any form.
2. You understand that your obligations under this Agreement will continue after termination of your volunteer relationship with the West Texas Medical Reserve Corps. You understand that your privileges hereunder are subject to periodic review, revision, and if appropriate, renewal.
3. The use and disclosure of Confidential Information is governed by Federal and State laws and regulations as well as the West Texas Medical Reserve Corps policies and procedures. The purpose of these specific requirements is to guarantee that Confidential Information remains confidential, i.e., such information shall be used and disclosed only as necessary to accomplish the West Texas Medical Reserve Corps mission. You shall be familiar with and adhere to all of these requirements concerning Confidential Information.
4. You shall actively participate in educational opportunities made available to you concerning proper safeguards for Confidential Information and uses and disclosures of Confidential Information as part of your volunteer duties.
5. If you have any questions concerning whether certain information constitutes Confidential Information, you shall bring the matter to the person supervising your volunteer work, or the Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator for direction.
6. You shall use and disclose Confidential Information only to the extent necessary to perform your volunteer duties. Such use and disclosure shall be in a manner consistent with applicable West Texas Medical Reserve Corps policies and procedures. Your use or disclosure of Confidential Information for any reason other than the performance of your volunteer duties or your failure to conform to applicable policies and procedures shall constitute misuse of Confidential Information and may be grounds for removal from your volunteer position with the West Texas Medical Reserve Corps and/or initiation of legal action against you.
7. West Texas Medical Reserve Corps is committed to protecting the privacy of those persons for whom it provides services. To fulfill its commitment, West Texas Medical Reserve Corps prohibits members of its workforce from discussing any information relating to persons covered by the plan except as necessary to perform their specific volunteer duties. You shall not engage in conversations concerning the fact that a person is, or has been, a patient of West Texas Medical Reserve Corps or concerning any information relating to such persons, e.g., diagnosis, procedures, outcome, payment.
8. If you have any questions concerning whether your volunteer duties permit you to use or disclose certain Confidential Information in a particular manner, you shall report to the person supervising your volunteer work or the Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator for direction. If you have any question concerning the application of a particular policy or procedure to a particular use or disclosure of Confidential Information, you shall bring the matter to the person supervising your volunteer work or the Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator as soon as possible.
9. You shall appropriately safeguard Confidential Information so as to prevent any inappropriate use or disclosure of such information. If you have reason to believe the confidentiality of information may have been compromised, you shall report such concerns to the person supervising your volunteer work or the Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator as soon as possible.

10. In performing your volunteer responsibilities, you shall not knowingly include or cause to be included in any record or report a false, inaccurate, or misleading entry. Nor shall you make or cause to be made any false, inaccurate, or misleading statement to any person. If you become aware of false, inaccurate, or misleading information contained in any record or report, or a false, inaccurate, or misleading statement, you shall report the matter to the person supervising your volunteer work and cooperate in taking all steps necessary to correct the record, report, or statement pursuant to West Texas Medical Reserve Corps policies and procedures.
11. You shall comply with West Texas Medical Reserve Corps policies and procedures concerning the alteration, deletion, or destruction of Confidential Information in any form. If you have any question concerning such policies and procedures, you shall bring the matter to the person supervising your volunteer work for direction. If you have any reason to believe such policies and procedures have been violated, you shall report such concerns to the person supervising your volunteer work or the Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator as soon as possible.
12. You shall understand that West Texas Medical Reserve Corps may monitor each and every time its computer systems are accessed. You understand that any action you take in these computer systems may be tagged and such actions may be traced back to you.
13. You shall respect the ownership of proprietary software. For example, you shall not make unauthorized copies of any software for your own use, even if the software is not physically protected against copying, nor shall you operate any non-licensed software on any computer provided by West Texas Medical Reserve Corps.

By signing this document, you certify that you have reviewed the foregoing Confidentiality Agreement, have been provided with an opportunity to ask questions concerning its terms, and understand the duties and obligations it imposes on you. You hereby agree to the duties and obligations as stated in this Confidentiality Agreement. You understand that this signed and dated document will become part of your volunteer file.

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Signature of Volunteer

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Printed Name

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Date

**VOLUNTEER CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**

I understand that, West Texas Medical Reserve Corps including its employees/volunteers/assignees/affiliates has a legal and ethical responsibility to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of *individual information, protected health information, or information related to or held by*, West Texas Medical Reserve Corps including obligations to protect and safeguard the confidentiality and privacy of such information.

**By signing this document, I understand and I agree that:**

I shall maintain and *safeguard* the confidentiality of any personal access code(s), user identification(s), access key(s) and/or password(s) used to access computer systems or other equipment. Should I discover that the confidentiality of my access code(s), user identification(s), access key(s), and/or password(s) has been compromised, I will immediately notify the Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator.

I shall *not* access or view any information other than what is required to do my job. If I have any question about whether access to certain information is required for me to do my job, I shall immediately consult the Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator.

I shall *not* use or disclose, orally, in writing, electronically or otherwise, any personal information including social security numbers, telephone numbers, street/e-mail addresses, etc. or information related to or held by West Texas Medical Reserve Corps

I shall *not* discuss or reveal any personal information or information related to or held by West Texas Medical Reserve Corps in an area where unauthorized individuals may hear or see such information, even if specifics, such as an individual's name, are not used. I understand that possible areas to keep in mind include, but are not limited to, hallways, elevators, cafeteria, public transportation, restaurants, and social events.

I shall *not* make inquiries about any information for any person or party, including, but not limited to, any family member, a friend, a third party, an employee or associate of West Texas Medical Reserve Corps, who does not have proper authorization to access such information.

I shall immediately return all property, including, but not limited to, keys, documents, and ID badges to West Texas Medical Reserve Corps upon termination (with or without cause) of my volunteer assignment/affiliation with West Texas Medical Reserve Corps

Any violation by me of this Agreement may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of any volunteer assignment/affiliation with West Texas Medical Reserve Corps and/or suspension, restriction or loss of privileges, in accordance with West Texas Medical Reserve Corps' policies, as well as *potential personal civil and criminal legal liabilities*. Any individual information or information and records related to or held by West Texas Medical Reserve Corps that I access or view at West Texas Medical Reserve Corps does *not* belong to me.

**By my signature below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand this Agreement in its entirety and I agree to comply with all of the above stated terms as a condition of my responsibilities as an MRC volunteer.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Volunteer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**RELEASE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

This signed document authorizes West Texas Medical Reserve Corps to release any necessary contact information to members of the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) for the purpose of contacting other MRC volunteers in the event of any Alert of the Medical Reserve Corps.

By signing this release you are acknowledging that your name, phone numbers, e-mail and fax numbers will be released and made public to other MRC volunteers.

You also acknowledge and agree that as a member of the MRC, you will not use any contact information you receive about any other MRC volunteer for any purpose other than an official Alert notification(s) to other MRC volunteers.

You are also granting permission for this information to be used by the MRC to contact you concerning issues of MRC training and other administrative subjects.

1. I understand that I have the right to refuse to release this information. If I refuse to release this information, it will not be possible for this office to process my application with the Medical Reserve Corps.
2. I understand that I may withdraw this consent upon written notice.
3. I hold West Texas Medical Reserve Corps harmless of any liability, criminal or civil, that may arise as a result of the release of this information about me. I also hold harmless any individual or organization that provides information to the above-named agency.
4. I do hereby give West Texas Medical Reserve Corps permission to release my personal information as needed for training and/or deployment of the Medical Reserve Corps.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Volunteer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## VOLUNTEER RISK

West Texas Medical Reserve Corps intends to mitigate and prevent risks to volunteers. Every attempt will be made to reduce risks to volunteers through training, education and use of universal precautions. In addition, volunteers will only be matched to positions for which they have the skills and qualifications to fulfill safely.

### **Volunteers Protected from Legal Liability**

**Under The Volunteer Protection Act of 1997, people who volunteer for non-profit organizations or governmental entities cannot be held liable for any harm (except for a harm caused by operation of a motor vehicle or a harm caused by criminal conduct or gross or reckless misconduct) that they may cause while engaged in volunteer activity. This organization [or entity] qualifies under federal law, so if you volunteer, you can do so secure in the knowledge that by volunteering you are not exposing yourself to additional legal liability. See [www.texmed.org/template.aspx?id=2107](http://www.texmed.org/template.aspx?id=2107)**

Be aware, however, that some unanticipated risk possibilities may be present both during a public health emergency and during non-emergency work with direct patient contact. Medical Reserve Corps volunteers agree to assume their own risk as a volunteer. Any incidents, accidents or injuries should be reported to the West Texas MRC Coordinator immediately.

### **Volunteer Statement/Agreement**

I have read the West Medical Reserve Corps policy on Volunteer Risk. I understand its contents and have had the opportunity to ask questions regarding my risk as a volunteer. I agree to assume my own risk as a volunteer and will report any incidents, accidents, or injuries immediately to the Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer Coordinator.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Volunteer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Medical Reserve Corps Websites

For registration and information:

[www.westtexasmrc.org](http://www.westtexasmrc.org)

For General Information:

[www.medicalreservecorps.gov](http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov)

For Internet-based training:

[www.mrc.train.org](http://www.mrc.train.org)