



Region 5 Volunteer Orientation Manual

Region 5 Bioterrorism Emergency Response Team
Perry County Health Department

Community Heroes

I. Mission Statement and Goals

To provide volunteers to the community where they are most needed. We stand eager to educate, to help prepare and to be ready to respond.

To educate and train enough volunteers to handle any Bioterrorism (BT) or health related emergency that might arise. Community Heroes will also promote awareness and educate the community on preparedness and health-related issues.

To help the community prepare for an emergency by establishing and maintaining a well-trained volunteer organization that is ready and capable to respond to a health emergency.

To be able to respond to a public health emergency in a timely organized manner.

II. Background and History:

The tragic events of September 11, 2001 changed the lives of the American people forever. The attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon heightened awareness nation-wide to the threat of terrorism, and prompted President Bush to sign the “Homeland Security Act of 2002.”

The Act restructures and strengthens the Executive Branch of the Federal Government to better meet the threat to our homeland posed by terrorism. It established a new Department of Homeland Security and created a federal department whose primary mission will be to help prevent, protect against, and respond to acts of terrorism on our soil.

In the fall of 2002, the State of Illinois received a bioterrorism preparedness grant from the Federal Government. This grant divided Illinois into eleven regions, based on existing highway patrol regions, and re-named these areas “Public Health Bioterrorism Preparedness Regions.” The grant also provided for 11 Emergency Response Coordinators and several Epidemiology Specialists. These teams were placed in regions based on geography and population.

After establishing bioterrorism preparedness plans throughout the State, a need for volunteers was identified to establish an organized, efficient way to recruit and retain volunteers for emergency preparedness.

Volunteers are a vital part of the communities we live in. We depend on them everyday and will depend on them in the event of an emergency. In order to be completely prepared, we must know that there are volunteers who know what to do in the event of an emergency and who will respond to the needs of their community.

III. Organizational structure:

- A. Region 5: Region 5 consists of 20 counties. Not all counties have a local health department to help the county's citizens, but all local public health departments establish and utilize a preparedness plan for all areas.
- B. Local Public Health Department: There are 20 counties in which Community Heroes serves, and each county's public health department will play an active role in educating and utilizing the Community Heroes volunteers.
- C. Emergency Response Coordinators: (ERC's) The Regional ERC's help the Local Health Departments organize and maintain their volunteer program (Community Heroes).
- D. County Emergency Management Agency (EMA): The County EMA works hand-in-hand with the Local Health Department. The County EMA will help organize and coordinate recruitment of Community Heroes and other volunteer activities within his/her county.
- E. Dispensing Site Volunteer Manager: The Dispensing Site Volunteer Manager will be in charge of making sure all volunteers are in the correct job at a dispensing site. He/she will also be in charge of coordinating the spontaneous volunteers at a Volunteer Reception Center (VRC).

IV. Volunteer Role:

- A. Dispensing Site: In the event of a bioterrorism event or other public health emergency, Community Heroes need to be ready to respond. Each county in Region 5 has established a preparedness plan and will activate it as needed; however, it will be impossible to put a plan in action without the sufficient people to run the site. Volunteers will be

needed to control patient flow, help fill out forms, dispense medication/vaccinations (properly credentialed medical professionals), translate, secure the facility, educate staff and patients, and fulfill other duties as needed. Staffing a medication-dispensing site is the primary function for all Community Heroes.

- B. A Community Heroes volunteer also has an optional role within his/her community. The 20 counties that make up Region 5 count on volunteers everyday for the success of their communities. Community Heroes will have the option of participating in several different volunteer functions within the health department such as assisting with bioterrorism surveillance or flu vaccination clinics. They will also have various other volunteer opportunities through other community volunteer agencies and throughout the region.

V. BT Dispensing Site:

- A. Purpose: A medication dispensing site plan is set up in each county in Region 5. The counties plans guide community efforts to mass medicate/vaccinate the affected people locally in the event of a bioterrorism attack.
- B. Volunteers: All volunteers and their families will be among the first individuals in the community to receive medication/vaccinations. Due to the nature of the event, volunteers who will be working at the dispensing site must be properly cared for before the site opens.
- C. Flow chart: All dispensing sites have a flow chart volunteers will follow. Each dispensing site's floor plan will be different but all volunteers will be familiar with the dispensing site. Volunteers will be trained to know where to go for supplies, assistance, rest, and food while also directing patients to the proper areas.
- D. Communications: Each dispensing site has communications plans that provide adequate means to communicate with the proper authorities, even if there is no power or the phone lines are down.
- E. Organizational chart: Each person in the dispensing site has a specific job. Each job was designed to create organization within an otherwise chaotic situation. After learning the sections of a dispensing site, volunteers will learn their dispensing site's organizational chart and job responsibilities. This will keep things moving smoothly and the appropriate people available for each task.

VI. Code of Conduct

A. As Community Heroes volunteers are direct representatives of their local public health department. The purpose of the public health department is to provide education, training and healthcare to the local community. We do not want, in any way, to harm anyone in a situation. As a result, all volunteers have several guidelines to follow.

1. Behavior: At all times, Community Heroes will act respectfully to co-workers and all other individuals they interact with during volunteer service. Any inappropriate behavior that might cause harm will not be tolerated.
2. Dress: Volunteer duties might involve physical labor (i.e. lifting boxes, bending, reaching); thus, volunteers will dress accordingly and bring a change of clothes as a precaution.
3. Safety: Volunteers will listen to the instructions of supervisors in order to ensure their safety. In a dispensing site, there might be certain precautionary measures that need to be addressed and supervisors will provide volunteers with this information
4. Public Information: Volunteers will be given a media direction card, which will allow them to speak one statement to the media, which is, “All media questions and concerns should be addressed by our media representative.” This card will also have a name and a way to contact that particular person.

B. Confidentiality: Volunteers working in a dispensing site or any other health related activity will have contact with patients and their health history. All patient information is confidential. All conversations or written patient information must be protected from unauthorized people. Some dispensing site information and volunteer information is also confidential, discretion is imperative.

VII. Identification Badges

A. Each Community Hero will be presented with a photo identification badge. This badge will serve as an entry key to a dispensing site.

B. Each badge will have the name and current photo of the volunteer. It will also include any type of pertinent credentials and Community Hero training information.

C. Each badge will be the property of the Region 5 Community Heroes program. It should be presented for identification if requested. It will be surrendered upon termination of volunteer services or immediately

reported if stolen or lost. It must not be given or loaned to anyone other than the person shown on the front of the badge. Use by anyone other than the person shown on the front of the badge is a direct violation of the policies of the Community Heroes program, and may result in termination of volunteer services from the Community Heroes program.

- D. Each badge will have a holographic image of the Community Hero logo on it that cannot be duplicated. This will verify Community Heroes volunteer identity.
- E. An identification badge bar code will be scanned at a dispensing site that will provide volunteer information. The scanning will allow tracking of all volunteer hours and a quick reference on volunteers in the facility at all times.
- F. Each volunteer entering a dispensing site will be given a public information card listing the authorized media spokesperson(s) and contact information. All volunteers will be asked to only read the statement on the card when approached by the media. **“All media questions and concerns should be addressed to our media representative.”** We ask that all volunteers refrain from giving the media any statements, on or off the record, and that they always refer to their media direction card.

VIII. Training

- A. Training and Orientation: Each volunteer will go through basic Community Heroes orientation (this packet) including Community Heroes guidelines, which have been implemented to ensure a safe, effective working environment. After basic orientation, volunteers will be able to continue further specific education/training.
- B. Job Specific Training: There will be training for each individual job at a dispensing site. These trainings might be in a classroom setting or a hands-on learning experience depending on the situation.
- C. Volunteer Opportunities: The Community Heroes program will provide volunteer assistance within the community whenever possible. In order for volunteers to be called upon appropriately, volunteer interests and skills must be known.

D. Training/Education Opportunities: Additional educational opportunities will be available to volunteers. Most classes can be attended at no cost to the volunteer.

1. The State Emergency Management Agency: Provides courses at not cost to you. Visit www.state.il.us/iema/ and click on the “trainings/exercises” link.

E. Dispensing Site Exercises: Dispensing site exercises will be hosted throughout the year allowing volunteers to practice what they have learned. Exercises are an opportunity to practice and improve skills and knowledge and to interact with other volunteers. Exercises should give insight into working in a dispensing site

Community Hero Commitment Form

I verify that I have read and understand the information included in the Community Heroes New Volunteer Orientation Manual.

I agree to abide by the guidelines established by Community Heroes and the local public health agency. I also understand that any incompliance with these guidelines could result in termination from the Community Heroes program.

I understand that by becoming a Community Hero, I am supporting the community in a volunteer capacity and will be solely responsible for my own actions. I will not hold Community Heroes, the local public health agency, or any other participating entity liable for any injury or harm I might incur.

Name (please print)

Social Security Number

Signature

Date

Witness

Date