

Frequently Answered Questions

1. What is NJSERV?

NJSERV stands for New Jersey State Emergency Registry of Volunteers. It is a secure, centralized online platform managed by the New Jersey Department of Health that allows individuals to register in advance to volunteer during public health emergencies, natural disasters, or other critical incidents.

NJSERV helps ensure that the State can quickly and efficiently mobilize trained volunteers when a crisis occurs—especially those with medical or emergency response expertise.

The system supports and manages several key volunteer programs, including:

- **Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals (ESAR-VHP)** – A national system that verifies the credentials of licensed health professionals for rapid deployment.
- **Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)** – A community-based network of medical and non-medical volunteers supporting local health initiatives and emergency response.

2. Who can register with ESAR-VHP?

ESAR-VHP is specifically for **licensed or certified health professionals**. You must:

- Either hold a valid, active license or certification, or be an active student pursuing a recognized licensed or certified profession
- Be 18 years or older
- Complete the registration process, including background verification

3. What roles do ESAR-VHP volunteers fill?

ESAR-VHP volunteers are typically activated for roles involving:

- Medical surge
- Vaccination and testing site
- Hospital or clinical staffing
- Behavioral and mental health support
- Public health education

4. Can non-medical volunteers register with ESAR-VHP?

No. ESAR-VHP is strictly for credentialed health professionals. However, non-medical volunteers may consider serving with programs like the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC).

5. What is the time commitment as an ESAR-VHP volunteer?

There is no regular time commitment. ESAR-VHP is a **standby system**—you'll be contacted if your services are needed.

Participation in any activation is always **voluntary**, and you can accept or decline as your schedule allows.

6. Is training required for ESAR-VHP volunteers?

In accordance with [New Jersey Office of Emergency Management Directive 1](#), the following FEMA courses must be completed:

- IS-100.c: Introduction to the Incident Command System
- IS-200.c: ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
- IS-700.b: National Incident Management System (NIMS), An Introduction
- IS-800.d: National Response Framework, An Introduction

Completing additional trainings is optional.

7. What about liability protection and insurance?

Volunteers registered with ESAR-VHP are generally protected under **Volunteer Protection Laws** and **emergency declarations**. More information will be provided during onboarding by the State Coordinators.

Medical volunteers are strongly encouraged to carry their own professional liability insurance that aligns with their specific scope of practice to ensure appropriate coverage in the event of any claims or legal matters arising from their volunteer activities.

8. Will I be deployed out of state?

Generally, ESAR-VHP volunteers serve within their home state. However, during large-scale emergencies, interstate deployment may be requested. You can always opt in or out of any deployment.

9. Who can volunteer for the MRC?

We welcome both medical professionals (e.g., nurses, doctors, EMTs, pharmacists) and non-medical volunteers who want to support public health and emergency response efforts.

Minimum eligibility includes:

- Must be 18 years or older
 - Passing a background check
 - Completing required training/orientation
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10. What types of roles are available for MRC volunteers?

Roles vary depending on your skills and interests. Volunteer roles include:

- Administrative support
 - Logistics and operations
 - Public health education
 - Triage and assessment
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11. Do I need previous medical or emergency experience?

No. While medical professionals are essential, non-medical volunteers play a crucial role in supporting operations, managing logistics, and assisting the community in many other ways.

12. What is the general time commitment for MRC volunteers?

Time commitments vary depending on your availability and the needs of your community. There is no defined weekly commitment, but ongoing engagement and training is a requirement of participation.

13. Is training provided to MRC volunteers?

Yes! There is a core curriculum for MRC volunteers which must be completed based on your assigned tier level. Also, your Unit Coordinators may assign additional trainings based on the defined missions and activities.

14. Are MRC volunteers covered by insurance or liability protection?

Yes. MRC volunteers are generally protected under **Volunteer Protection Laws** and **emergency declarations**. More information will be provided during onboarding by the Unit Coordinators.

Medical volunteers are strongly encouraged to carry their own professional liability insurance that aligns with their specific scope of practice to ensure appropriate coverage in the event of any claims or legal matters arising from their volunteer activities.

15. Will I only be called for disasters as an MRC volunteer?

No. In addition to emergencies, you may be asked to volunteer for a community event, such as school-based flu vaccinations, and first-aid stations.

16. Can I use my MRC volunteer experience for school credit or professional development?

Yes! Many educational programs accept MRC hours for community service credit. Be sure to check with your Unit Coordinator if they can provide documentation or letters of reference upon request.
