

**Public Health Reserve Corps**

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[www.kingcounty.gov/health](http://www.kingcounty.gov/health)

**Volunteer your best  
when the worst happens...**

**Join the Public Health Reserve Corps!**

**Recruiting now for medical and non-medical positions!**

**What is the Public Health Reserve Corps?**

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**The Public Health Reserve Corps (PHRC) is a community-based group of local medical and non-medical workers who can serve as volunteers during a public health emergency.**

The mission of the PHRC is to enhance Public Health's ability to respond to public health emergencies or disasters to limit injury, illness, suffering and death.



When every minute counts, the PHRC will play a major role with:

- Setting up, working, and running a temporary field hospital, emergency shelter, or medication center
- Dispensing medications
- Administering vaccinations
- Providing information and support to the community
- Conducting health screening

**Why should I join the PHRC?**

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- As a first responder, your health and safety is priority
- As a first responder, you will be the first to receive critical updates on emergencies and disasters
- Make a difference in your community
- Team up with friends and colleagues
- Learn how to better prepare for disaster
- Enhanced medical liability protection
- Gain valuable training



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## Who can volunteer with the Public Health Reserve Corps?

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Right now, Public Health is recruiting for the following:

### Licensed medical volunteer roles:

- Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners
- Clinical Social Workers
- EMT/Paramedics
- Licensed Practical Nurses and Licensed Vocational Nurses
- Marriage and Family Therapist
- Mental Health Counselors - Registered or Licensed
- Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians
- Physicians and Physician Assistants
- Psychiatrist
- Psychologist
- Registered Nurses

### Non-medical, non-licensed support volunteer roles:

- Administrative Support
- Chaplains/Spiritual Care Worker
- Pastors

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## Questions about volunteering

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### 1. What will I be doing as a volunteer?

**Volunteer roles will vary, depending on the emergency or disaster and what staffing needs exist. Volunteers may also be assigned duties that are different from traditional every day work duties. For example, a licensed optometrist may be assigned to provide triage or give injections. An administrative assistant may assist with setting up hospital beds. However, PHRC volunteers will not be assigned roles that they do not feel comfortable with, where health and safety are jeopardized or are physically incapable of.**

Examples of volunteer roles may include but not limited to:

#### Medical roles:

- Medical operations
- Dispensing antibiotics
- Injecting vaccines
- Reviewing health histories
- Conducting medical screening
- Performing patient exams
- Patient care
- Triage
- Basic life support

**Non-medical roles:**

- Inventory control
- Medical and non-medical supply management
- Pharmaceutical inventory management
- Transporting patients
- Setting up hospital equipment
- Assisting people with paperwork
- Greeting and directing people through a medication center
- Providing information about a disease or condition to people
- Managing the flow of people through a medication center
- Providing interpretation services

**2. Who can become a support, non-medical volunteer?**

Anyone who is 18 years old or older, successfully passes a criminal background check, not employed by King County, works well in stressful situations, has good customer service skills, and works well in a team.

**3. What type of emergencies would I be responding to?**

The Public Health Reserve Corps serves response activities by Public Health Seattle & King County in an emergency. Currently, volunteers in the program will be focused on specific Public Health response functions like mass vaccination clinics or setting up and operating alternate care facilities to support and relieve the hospital/health care system in time of disaster or emergency. For example:

- During the 2007 flu season there were several pediatric deaths related to the flu complications. Over Presidents Day weekend Public Health opened up three mass vaccination clinics to provide immunizations to adults and children in the community rapidly.
- During the 2006 December windstorm Public Health set up and managed an emergency care shelter to provide patient care to nursing home residents who had lost power and had to evacuate.
- Public Health emergency response also made preparations for Hurricane Katrina evacuees in 2005. Anticipating the arrival of potentially thousands displaced from the storm, some in poor health, Public Health developed a model and protocol for screening people once their flights landed. Ultimately, no planes arrived, but volunteer physicians, nurse practitioners, and registered nurses were recruited in anticipation of needing their screening assistance.
- The Public Health Reserve Corps may also assist during a bioterrorist event, specifically an anthrax exposure. Public Health would be responsible for dispensing antibiotics within 72 hours of exposure and would need volunteers to help dispense antibiotics from designated medication centers to exposed residents.

**4. What happens if I'm needed by my employer during an emergency?**

First and foremost, Public Health understands that your first commitment is to your employer. In a large emergency in which the health care system is impacted, your responsibilities are with your employer.

However, many type of events in which the Public Health Reserve Corps would assist will be of a smaller scale and may not have a significant impact on the larger health care system. In many instances, early response to these types of emergencies by Public Health will help the larger health care system from being overwhelmed.

## 5. Can medical, nursing, or public health students volunteer?

Students are encouraged to apply as a support volunteer. If students have an active professional license, they can apply as a medical volunteer.

## 6. Can medical residents and interns be a medical volunteer?

Yes. Medical residents and interns will work under the supervision of Public Health – Seattle & King County's Medical Director or Chief of Pharmacy.

## 7. Can retired medical professionals volunteer?

Yes. Retired medical professionals are valuable assets and are encouraged to apply. If they do not have an active professional license, they can apply as a support volunteer. If they have an active professional license, they can apply as a medical volunteer. For more information about retired volunteer medical workers go to:

<https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/hpqa1/hps5/RetiredMedicalWorker/default.htm>

## 8. How do I become a Public Health Reserve Corps volunteer?

**The Public Health Reserve Corps for Seattle and King County values diversity and encourages those interested in serving with us to apply.**

**Go to: <http://agency.governmentjobs.com/kinghealthrc/default.cfm>**

All interested individuals complete a volunteer application. On-line applications are preferred. For a paper application, contact: Amie Larsen at [Amie.Larsen@kingcounty.gov](mailto:Amie.Larsen@kingcounty.gov)

After receiving the application, Public Health – Seattle & King County will:

- Review the application materials
- Conduct a professional license check (for medical volunteer applicants)
- Conduct a criminal background check

The PH Reserve Corps program manager and/or designee will briefly meet with the volunteer applicant. This can be done in person or over the phone. The applicant will have the opportunity to ask questions about the volunteer position and to discuss whether the PH Reserve Corps is an appropriate fit.

Public Health – Seattle & King County will contact the references provided on the application to verify the applicant's qualifications and suitability for volunteering with the PH Reserve Corps.

The goal of this process is to ensure that:

- Volunteers have clear expectations of the volunteer positions, and thus a rewarding experience.
- Volunteers and the public are protected through a quality assurance screening procedure.

## 9. How much time is required to volunteer?

Volunteers devote 8 hours per year in the Public Health Reserve Corps for orientation, drills and training. Professional continuing education credits will be offered whenever possible during these 8 hours. Time spent volunteering during an emergency will vary depending on the scenario and volunteer availability.

## 10. What type of training do volunteers receive?

Volunteers receive training appropriate to their roles in an emergency. Topics include Incident Command Structure, Medication/Vaccination Center system, alternate care facility set up and operations, as well as role specific trainings like, for example, dispensing antibiotics for anthrax or using communication radios. Additionally, volunteers participate in drills such as Public Health – Seattle & King County's recent mass antibiotic dispensing drill and mass flu vaccination clinic drill and alternate care facility training exercise.

Professional continuing education credits are offered whenever possible.

## 11. What type of training and certification are required of PHRC volunteers?

Upon acceptance into the PHRC, volunteers are required to complete the following training within the first month of volunteering:

FEMA's Incident Command System Online Training:  
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is100HC.asp>

FEMA's National Incident Management System Online Training:  
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is700.asp>

CPR/First Aid

Updated immunization record (Public Health provides immunizations and titers free of charge to volunteers at Public Health clinic locations)

Sign up for the PHRC volunteer orientation

Once trainings and certifications are complete volunteers must provide copies of completion certificates and/or records to Public Health to include in volunteer personnel files.

## 12. What type of liability protection is provided to volunteers?

Volunteers receive liability protection and compensation for injury or death through the State of Washington's Emergency Worker Program during State approved training events and emergency missions.

For liability protection description, see RCW 38.52.180(2). For compensation for injury or death description, see RCW 38.52.260, .290, .340, and .190. Washington State rules governing the Emergency Worker Program are contained in Chapter 118-04 WAC  
<http://search.leg.wa.gov/pub/textsearch/default.asp>

### More information:

Emergency worker liability coverage: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=118-04>

Retired volunteer medical worker coverage:

<https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/hpqa1/hps5/RetiredMedicalWorker/default.htm>

**13. Are Public Health Reserve Corps volunteers paid?**

Volunteer time is uncompensated from King County.

**14. What other Medical Reserve Corps Units are in Washington State?**

The Public Health Reserve Corps is just one of many Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) programs in the county and Washington State. To learn more about other MRC units, go to:

[www.medicalreservecorps.gov/state.asp?state=56](http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/state.asp?state=56)