

DPH Process for Review of Applications for Federal Recognition of Massachusetts MRC Units

The DPH Emergency Preparedness Bureau (EPB) will provide the national MRC office with a recommendation for each application for federal recognition as a Massachusetts unit. Each application will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

DPH will encourage all applicant units, as it encourages all existing MRC units, to work collaboratively with other MRCs (nationally recognized or not), particularly those within their existing EP region. When an applicant steps forward from an area that is already served by an existing regional MRC, DPH will consult with representatives of the existing unit and the applicant to discuss the application and to encourage and facilitate the parties to establish or renew collaboration and coordination of activities. If possible, DPH will facilitate a meeting of representatives of the existing MRC and the applicant. In areas where the applicants are from communities that are not currently served by an existing MRC, DPH will contact contiguous MRC units to ascertain the feasibility of expansion of an existing unit or to encourage collaboration across the units.

Prior to making its recommendation to the national office, the Emergency Preparedness Bureau will meet with the applicant unit and review the application based on the following:

- Mission and vision for the applicant unit's ongoing development and sustainability.
- Statement of reason for seeking recognition if the applicant is within an existing regional or multi-community MRC, including a statement as to why the existing MRC does not meet the community's needs.
- Evidence of support from the local health director/agent and/or the Board of Health;
- Unit should have access to necessary assets:
 - large and representative membership, including MRC volunteers and the sponsoring or advisory group;
 - ongoing recruitment program, with a focus on specialty expertise (physicians, nurses, pharmacists, public safety, emergency management, logistical support, etc);
 - community base of operations, i.e. in a LBOH or other sponsoring organization with focus on public health;
 - internal organization set up to track and update volunteer and partner information;
 - internal policies and Standard Operating Procedures in place or under development;
 - process for CORI checks;
 - process for verifying and badging volunteers; and
 - training program that matches MRC core competencies.
- Plan for development of monetary resources and donations.

- Plan for and assurance of ongoing collaboration with overlapping and contiguous MRC units, including plans for working jointly with neighboring communities.

After meeting with the applicant unit and consulting with the regional unit if applicable, the DPH EPB, as the state coordinator, will issue its recommendation to the national MRC office.