



Funding Allocation Guidance for Medical Reserve Corps Units across MA April 17, 2018

The Steering Committee recognizes the importance of using an equitable, replicable funding formula for distributing annual funds across regions. By adapting a standardized formula, MRC units can work more strategically to ensure scalability if funding levels change. ***Please note: If the region does not feel that the formulas suggested below satisfy the needs of their units and communities, the units within the region should cooperatively determine an alternate method/formula and provide a rationale for it.***

The Steering Committee encourages MRC unit leaders to think deliberately about future funding when reviewing this guidance. Replicable funding formulas will help increase efficiency and equity among communities, allowing funding to be used purposefully across regions. By working with other MRCs in the region, units can demonstrate a more targeted approach in developing workplans and budgets based on regional priorities and values.

When considering potential changes in funding, the Steering Committee recommends regions consider the interests of the community, as well as the individual mission of units. While we acknowledge that these conversations may be difficult, the intent of these changes is to build MRC capacity across the state, positively impacting the preparedness, response, and overall resiliency of the Commonwealth.

Potential Funding Formulas to Consider

As regions begin preparing for the next budget period, leaders are encouraged to think strategically about future funding. The Steering Committee has developed three possible funding models for units who wish to identify or modify their current models. *Regions are not required to use these models, but rather, are encouraged to identify justifiable formulas.*

Workplans should reflect the rationales for funding that are used in each region. For example, if a region provides direct MRC unit allocations on the basis of population, units that receive additional funding should demonstrate how this funding is used to meet the needs of the population.

1. MODEL ONE

- Unit leaders develop a single regional workplan and budget.
- A percentage of the region's funding is allocated for multiple regional projects. These projects address regional gaps.
- Funds not allocated to regional projects are allocated based on funding requests/applications to the regional MRC Advisory Group. Once approved, they will correspond to specific tasks outlined in the regional workplan.

- For example, one unit covers a population with a high percentage of non-English-speakers. The non-English speakers are not receiving the appropriate preparedness materials from the unit, therefore a workplan would identify the development of translated materials and associated costs.
 - Considerations:
 - Units must collaborate to develop the regional workplan and budget.
 - The MRC Advisory Group must develop a system for how they review and approve funding requests from units.

2. MODEL TWO

- Unit leaders develop a single regional workplan and budget.
- A percentage of the region's funding is allocated for multiple regional projects. These projects address regional gaps.
- Funds not allocated to a regional project are distributed as individual unit allocations, according to one or more of the factors to consider (see below – "Factors to Consider for Unit Allocations").
- Considerations:
 - Units must collaborate to develop the regional workplan and budget.
 - Units must still develop a funding formula for the unit allocation. (see below- "Example of how to Develop a Factor-Based Formula")
 - Formulas based on multiple factors can be complicated to develop and implement.
 - If a simple formula is developed around only one factor, such as population, it potentially provides additional funding to units with high populations (depending on current regional funding structure) and potentially decreases future funding to units that cover large geographic areas with smaller populations.

3. MODEL THREE

- Each unit in the region has its own individual workplan and budget.
- A percentage of the region's funding is allocated to a regional project(s)
 - Similar to a mini-grant, this project addresses a regional gap.
 - The regional project is reflected in all units' workplans, but is only included in one unit's budget.
- Funds not allocated to a regional project are distributed as individual unit allocations, according to one or more of the factors to consider (see below – "Factors to Consider for Unit Allocations").
- Considerations:
 - Units must still develop a funding formula for the unit allocation. (see below- "Example of how to Develop a Factor-Based Formula")
 - Formulas based on multiple factors can be complicated to develop and implement.
 - If a simple formula is developed around only one factor, such as population, it potentially provides additional funding to units with high populations (depending on current regional funding structure)

and potentially decreases future funding to units that cover large geographic areas with smaller populations.

- Individual unit allocations potentially decrease the likelihood of units pooling resources to work and fund projects/staff collaboratively (see County-based funding in Region 1).

Factors to Consider for Unit Allocations

The Steering Committee recognizes the diversity of the MRC structures (county-based, single community-based, regional units, etc.), along with the varying demographics of each coverage area. The Steering Committee has therefore included a list of factors that regions may want to consider when looking at funding formulas and designing workplans. These factors (while not exhaustive) have the advantage of capturing regional and community needs, and can be examined with a variety of data sources.

In determining funding for the region, some factors to consider could include:

- Population covered by the unit
- Demographic profile of the region
 - Age breakdown
 - Income levels
 - Poverty status
 - Race and ethnicity
 - Environmental Justice populations – based on income level, minority status, and Limited English Proficiency
- Geographic area served (size, terrain, etc.)
- Regional gaps identified (jurisdictional risk assessment, hazard vulnerability analysis, etc.)
- Historical incidents (i.e. proximity to weather events, major planned events, etc.)

If a region chooses to focus on one or more of these factors and use it to weight funding allocations, activities in the workplan(s) should be tied to efforts that relate to the factors.

Example of How to Develop a Factor-Based Formula

A region could identify MRC units that meet certain minimum thresholds – for example, a unit in which 20% or more of its population lives in a census block group where Environmental Justice (EJ) criteria are met. Additional funding could be given to units that meet this threshold, in order for it to develop an activity or project that improves emergency preparedness for that specific community.

- Example: Region A (with 4 units) sets a funding formula that is 90% population-based + 10% EJ based.
 - If the regional allocation is \$40,000, 90% of the regional allocation is set aside for population-based funding (\$36,000). Region A has a total

population of 40,000. The allocation per individual in the region is \$36,000/40,000 (\$0.90/person)

- Unit 1 has a population of 15,000. Its population allocation is $\$0.90 * 15,000$ (\$13,500.00)
- Unit 2 has a population of 5,000. Its population allocation is $\$0.90 * 5,000$ (\$4,500.00).
- Units 3 and 4 each have a population of 10,000. Its population allocations is $\$0.90 * 10,000$ each (\$9,000.00 each).
- 10% of the regional allocation is set aside for units that meet EJ-thresholds (\$4,000). In Region A, Units 1 and 4 meet the thresholds. \$4,000 is divided by 2 and each unit receives an additional \$2,000 worth of funding.
- In this example, Unit 1 receives a total of \$15,500.

Data Sources

Please note that DPH is available to assist with the provision of data when reviewing the factors to consider. The following data sources are available to unit leaders who wish to collect data about their communities:

- Jurisdictional risk assessment¹
- [BEH Portal](#) community profiles
- Regional Hazard vulnerability analysis (if available)
- Mapping resources:
 - [RX Open](#)
 - [Social Vulnerability Index Map](#)
 - [Toxics User Map](#)
 - [Empower Map](#)

How to Develop a Regional Project

Similar to the approach to unit allocations, the Steering Committee encourages regions to use the data sources and other available resources. Units can brainstorm ideas for addressing known regional gaps. Regions could develop projects that address:

- Population covered by the unit
- Regional gaps that have been pre-identified (jurisdictional risk assessment, hazard vulnerability analysis, etc.)
- Demographic profile of the region
 - Age breakdown
 - Income levels
 - Poverty status
 - Race and ethnicity

¹ These can be requested from a region's HMCC sponsoring organization.

- Environmental Justice populations – based on income level, minority status, and Limited English Proficiency
- Historical incidents and gaps (i.e. proximity to weather events or major planned events)
- After-action reports from emergencies/drills

A regional project can be geographically specific, yet still address a regional gap.