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# TEXAS DISASTER MEDICAL SYSTEM

*Responder Safety and Health Workgroup Deployment Guidelines*

Pre-Deployment Guidelines

## Purpose

These guidelines aim to offer important health and safety information and resources for responders to be addressed prior to a deployment or emergency response. These guidelines aim to provide for the safety, security and well-being of emergency responders in the State of Texas.

## Goals

- 1. Keep responders safe and healthy preparing for, during and following a deployment or emergency response.**
- 2. Offer information and resources for responders to prepare effectively and efficiently for a safe and healthy response.**
- 3. Offer reasonable, affordable preparations for responders to address prior to a deployment or emergency response.**

## Overview

The Texas Disaster Medical System aims to establish and maintain a strategic framework to support local, regional, and state health and medical disaster response in Texas. This system is an effective, integrated health and medical disaster response system dedicated to protecting and saving lives in Texas. The Responder Health and Safety work group has been charged with providing guidelines for the pre-deployment, deployment and post-deployment protection of our most valuable asset, our responders, during a deployment or emergency response. These guidelines offer best practices and recommendations for responders. By following these guidelines and using common sense, we expect our responders to have a safe tenure during their service to the State of Texas.

## Pre-Deployment Recommendations

### 1. Rostering and Credentialing

1. **Registration: records basic and credential information about the emergency responders into a data base that includes required authorizations, demographics and emergency contacts**
2. **Emergency credentialing: assigning a credential level based upon responder credentials, training and education**
3. **Emergency verification: periodically confirming responder certification**
4. **Emergency badging: assigning an I.D. badge in accordance with the credential level**

The Texas Disaster Medical System Responder Health and Safety work group is currently working to identify the most appropriate informatics system that is capable to meet these necessary functions. The ideal system will be easily accessible and keep information in a single database. This system will be able to track individual responders from enrollment through demobilization on a single event. This program will also be able to follow responders through sequential deployments for long-term surveillance.

### 2. Pre-Deployment Health Screening

Prior to a deployment or response within the Texas Disaster Medical System, responders should obtain a health screening from their sponsoring agency's physician. The Responder Health and Safety work group is working to create guidelines to allow responders to be cleared by the sponsoring agency's physician to work in specific levels, based on the operational response required.

These operational levels will be delineated and described with examples of physical roles and activities in order for allow the sponsoring agency's physician to understand the specific demands of various roles of response.

This sponsoring agencies should aim to offer this health screening annually.

### 3. Pre-Deployment Immunization Recommendations

Responders may come in contact with patients or infective material from patients, and are at risk for exposure to (and possible transmission of) vaccine-preventable diseases. These recommendations represent the minimum immunizations responders should obtain prior to a deployment or emergency response. These recommendations are based on established CDC guidelines for healthcare workers.

#### Clinical Provider Recommendations:

##### Mandatory:

- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Tetanus

##### Strongly Recommend:

- MMR
- Influenza
- Pneumococcal
- Pertussis

#### Non-Clinical Provider Recommendations:

##### Strongly Recommend:

- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Tetanus

##### Recommend:

- MMR
- Influenza
- Pneumococcal
- Pertussis

### 4. Responder Deployment Bag

Response teams within the Texas Disaster Medical System may choose to offer packing guidelines specific to team member role and needs.

The Emergency Medical Task Force packing guidelines are established as “On Person,” “Go Bag,” and “72-hour” guidance documents. These guidance documents are robust and should be followed by any responder. ***\*Hyperlink to files, hosted on TDMS webpage.***

- On Person Packing List
- Go Bag Packing List
- 72-Hour Bag Packing List

Responders should remember to pack identification, cash and prescription medications.

### 5. Responder Health and Safety Training

Training is critical for the health, safety, preparedness and accountability of the responder. The Texas Disaster Medical System has developed basic courses for responders. Sponsoring agencies may also offer training for responders. Preparing responders to avoid possible health and safety incidents will add to responder’s longevity and resilience.

***\*Include list of basic/minimum TDMS/System training, if available.***