

TITLE: State ESF8 Responder Safety & Health Concept of Operations for 2011 Hurricane Season

VERSION: 1.4

DATE: July 27, 2011

1. **PURPOSE:** To establish a process for providing relevant responder health and safety information for SERT partners, and monitoring responder safety and health (RSH) for ESF8 responders during the 2011 hurricane season. These activities will assure 1) health and safety of individual responders, 2) team safety and health, and 3) mission completion without un-necessary risks.
2. **SITUATION:** State ESF8 deploys responders to the area of impact to provide public health and medical services based on mission requests from counties. A systematic process is used to deploy State ESF8 resources to ensure they are monitored and supported appropriately. Part of this responsibility includes assuring the safety and health of responders while deployed. Additionally, at the state and local levels, ESF 8 provides relevant health and safety information to other ESF's and organizations, to ensure their responders are aware of potential health threats and implement appropriate measures to prevent adverse health outcomes.

3. ASSUMPTIONS

- a. Development and dissemination of incident specific responder safety and health messages and materials may be appropriate to responders across disciplines.
- b. This sections of this concept of operations related to individual responders, applies only to those responders who are deployed as part of the State Emergency Response Team, Emergency Support Function 8 (Public Health and Medical) umbrellas.
- c. State ESF8 may deploy personnel to the field as a part of the state's hurricane response efforts based on a specific mission.
- d. While in the field, personnel may be exposed to environmental conditions or assigned to job duties that increase risks to the responder's personal health and safety, unless properly mitigated.
- e. State ESF8 will assure deployed responders have accurate risk-based information, training, vaccinations and personal protective equipment based on the assigned mission to mitigate risks.
- f. State ESF8 will not deploy personnel who are not in good physical or mental health.
- g. If a deployed responder becomes un-fit to continue deployment, the individual will be demobilized and returned home.
- h. State ESF8 will assure access to emergency medical care for responders who become ill or injured while deployed and initiate Worker's Compensation procedures consistent with the employing organization procedures and processes.

4. AUTHORITY

- a. F.S. 20.43 – Department of Health
- b. F.S. 252 – Emergency Management

5. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

This section applies only to those responders deployed as part of the State Emergency Response Team, Emergency Support Function-8 (Public Health and Medical) response.

a. **Pre-deployment Expectations of Individuals:** It is the responsibility of individuals who may be deployed and their supervisors to assess and assure fitness for duty prior to committing to a deployment. Individuals considering deployment should read the pre-deployment considerations document, complete a [pre-deployment assessment](#) and review the assessment with their supervisors to determine if deployment is appropriate.

i. Personnel should be able to meet the following standards if being deployed:

- Be physically and mentally able to safely perform the usual acts of daily living without assistance of another individual or mechanical device (e.g., CPAP, BiPAP, nebulizers, supplemental O2, braces, crutches, canes, or wheelchairs).
- Be able to perform duties for a prolonged period (12 hours or more).
- Be able to subsist under field conditions in an austere environment for prolonged periods to include field rations and limited vital services including potable water, heat / air conditioning, vector control, sanitation, laundry, hygiene, privacy, or sleeping facilities.
- Be free of health conditions which require special appliances, periodic attention, treatment, or follow-up within 30 days of the deployment start date or for the foreseen duration.
- Not be significantly limited in musculoskeletal mobility or exercise tolerance regardless of the given assignment. Routine, ordinary physical activity should not cause undue fatigue, shortness of breath, pronounced muscular weakness, or pain (including angina/cardiac pain) that is severe or ominous.
- Not have an acute, progressive or recurrent disease or condition which:
 - Can cause functional limitations while performing assigned duties;
 - Can cause the appearance of symptoms or complications that create concern, or endanger the safety of self or others.
 - Restrict the types of duties that can safely be assigned.
- Be able to receive required immunizations, prophylaxis, treatments, pharmaceuticals and other interventions that are necessary to safeguard health and successfully complete assigned duties.
- If needed, be able to be medically cleared, fit-tested, trained, and perform in all required items of uniform or personal protective equipment (PPE) including N-95 respirator that can be team or function specific.
- Be able to perform heavy physical work at least over short periods of time.
- Have sufficient hearing to safely perform duty.
- Have sufficient night vision to travel unassisted at night.
- Have sufficient corrected visual acuity to safely perform duties.
- Have normal tolerance to heat and cold.
- Have no increased disposition to sudden incapacitation.
- Be able to travel independently by air, land, or sea using public, private, military or any government-supplied conveyance.

- ii. Individuals unable to be deployed because they do not meet fitness for duty standards may still be utilized as a part of the response by performing duties within their normal work conditions.
- b. **State ESF8 RSH Coordination:** Both the State ESF8 Planning and Logistics Sections have responsibilities to assure responder safety and health during activations. These units must work collectively to implement this concept of operations.
- i. State ESF8, Planning Section: Upon activation of ESF8, the Planning Section will activate a Technical Specialists to monitor, assess and advise on responder safety and health components of the response. The RSH Technical Specialists will perform duties such as:
 - Assess environmental and job-related RSH risks by mission and develop [Hazard Exposure Risk Assessments](#) to be provided to personnel as a part of their deployment package.
 - Advise the Logistics Section on vaccinations, prophylaxis, and personal protective equipment necessary for personnel based on mission.
 - Develop messaging, in coordination with the Information Management Unit, to responders on responder safety and health precautions utilizing the [RSH Considerations for Hurricanes](#).
 - Monitor responder safety and health incident reports from the field and make recommendations to Planning Coordinator on courses of action to mitigate future incidents.
 - Coordinate with forward safety liaisons in the field on incident reporting.
 - Provide guidance on general RSH considerations
 - ii. State ESF8, Logistics Section: The State ESF8 Logistics Section will implement the responder safety and health processes in collaboration with the Planning Section. This will involve the Logistics Staffing Unit, Logistics Materials Unit and a Medical Unit Leader.
 - The Logistics Staffing Unit will:
 - Assure individuals considering deployment complete the [Pre-Deployment Assessment](#)
 - Provide the mission specific [Hazard Exposure Risk Assessment](#) to all persons being deployed.
 - Assure individuals being deployed have been provided the vaccinations, prophylaxis and PPE recommended by the RSH Technical Specialists based on their mission.
 - The Logistics Materials Unit will:
 - Procure any necessary vaccinations, prophylaxis and PPE recommended by the RSH Technical Specialists for deployed responders.
 - The Medical Unit Leader will deploy to the mobilization/demobilization center in the field to be the on-the-ground point of contact for responder safety and health issues. The Forward Safety Liaison should be a licensed medical provider such as a nurse or paramedic. The Forward Safety Liaison will:
 - Provide safety briefings to in-coming responders (based on the information provided in the hazard exposure risk assessment).
 - Identify and communicate to appropriate staff locations where responders can receive emergency medical care should they become ill or injured during deployment.

- Monitor responder safety and health conditions in the field.
 - Serve as the point of contact to team leaders for reporting any RSH incidents that occur during deployments.
 - Facilitate responder injury/illness reporting to appropriate entities including assisting with completion of Agency Workers Compensation reports as required.
 - Complete daily [RSH Field Reports](#) to log safety incidents, actions taken (i.e. called ambulance, etc), and submit reports to the RSH Technical Specialists.
 - Coordinate the demobilization of any personnel that become unable to continue deployment due to health issues.
- iii. **Team Leaders:** Team leaders are responsible for the personnel on their team while deployed. Team leaders will:
- Monitor the health and safety of their team members on a daily basis.
 - Assure team members follow RSH instructions and utilize personal protective equipment as directed.
 - Report any life-threatening incidents that occur to the Forward Safety Liaison immediately and all other incidents with-in 2 hours of the incident.
 - Identify any personnel that become unable to continue deployment while in the field and coordinate with the Forward Safety Liaison to have that person will be demobilized and returned home.
 - Stop unsafe acts observed and apply necessary practices to prevent unsafe acts.
- iv. **Deployed Personnel:** Deployed personnel will:
- Follow all RSH instructions.
 - Utilize personal protective equipment provided as appropriate.
 - Report any safety incidents that occur to team leader or incident management team Safety Officer.
 - Notify team leader or supervisor of health conditions that arise which may affect ability to continue deployment.
 - Stop unsafe acts observed and apply necessary practices to prevent unsafe acts.
- c. **Post Deployment Expectations:** Individuals will be provided [information in the demobilization process about reporting](#) any health conditions that develop following their deployment. Individuals should promptly seek medical care if any symptoms develop following deployment and notify their supervisor.

6. RECORD OF CHANGES AND APPROVAL

This concept of operations replaces and supersedes the previously disseminated “Scope for the State Medical Response System and State Medical Response Teams” dated August 10, 2010.

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