

THE JOHNS HOPKINS “GO TEAM”

Frequently Asked Questions

Thank you for your interest in the Johns Hopkins Go Team! To learn more, please read the following information below.

What is the Johns Hopkins Go Team?

The “Go Team” is the deployable medical asset for the Johns Hopkins Institutions. In 2008, the Johns Hopkins Office of Critical Event Preparedness and Response (CEPAR) received a Federal grant to create, train, and equip a rapidly deployable medical team that could respond to regional or national disasters. Nearly 200 healthcare workers from a variety of departments within the Institutions were recruited and trained for the team.

Depending on the complexity of the disaster and regional needs, the team composition may be scaled up or scaled down. The capabilities of the team include mass casualty triage, establishing and/or staffing of field clinics for victims, medical support to first responders, medical support to shelters, backfill in hospitals, and/or public health services such as surveying and vaccinations. Go Team members undergo a specialized training program that includes online modules, classroom courses, and in-field experiences on topics such as basic and advanced disaster life support, biological and chemical terrorism, radiation events, bombings, natural disasters, incident command, leadership skills, and communication.

I understand the Go Team is an official Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) team. What is an MRC?

The federal Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) program within the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General is a national network of local groups of volunteers committed to improving the health, safety and resiliency of their communities. MRC volunteers include medical and public health professionals, as well as others interested in strengthening the public health infrastructure and improving the preparedness and response capabilities of their local jurisdiction. MRC units identify, screen, train and organize the volunteers, and utilize them to support routine public health activities and augment disaster preparedness and response efforts.

In the fall of 2010, we registered the Johns Hopkins Go Team as an official MRC team. This designation has allowed the current team to broaden the scope of activities and response efforts through the addition of more Hopkins personnel and expanded training opportunities. The overall goal of the Johns Hopkins Go Team MRC is to provide a valuable disaster response asset, to enhance the emergency preparedness of Johns Hopkins employees through on-going training and education, and to serve our surrounding community through health-related projects.

Who should consider applying for the Johns Hopkins Go Team?

Only permanent part-time or full-time employees of the Johns Hopkins Institutions may apply at this time. We are currently not accepting applications from students, residents, traveling nurses, or per diem employees.

We are looking for a variety of care providers, including but not limited to:

- Physicians
- Physician extenders
- Nurses
- Pharmacists
- Mental health providers
- Support technicians
- Respiratory therapists
- EMTs
- Researchers
- Logistics specialists—facility and supply managers
- Dietitians
- Administration/financial officers
- Safety officers
- Security officers
- Epidemiologists
- Public affairs officers
- IT/communications officers

Due to the logistical challenges associated with recruiting, maintaining and training a large cadre of volunteers, CEPAR limits the number of official team members to 200-250. Some who apply may be placed on the “wait list” pending an open position on the team.

What is the greatest need for the MRC team in terms of providers?

The original Go Team has a wide variety of providers, but there are some specialties and provider types that are underrepresented. We are specifically looking to recruit physicians, physician extenders and other staff from pediatrics, surgery, infectious disease, primary care, and anesthesia.

Will I need special training to be on the Go Team?

Yes. Selected team members undergo a specialized training program that includes web-based modules, classroom courses, and in-field training sessions.

All members will be asked to complete two web-based Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) courses:

- Introduction to the National Incident Management System (IS-700)
- Introduction to the Incident Command System for Healthcare/Hospitals (IS-100.HC)

Two specialized courses are offered to train team members:

- *Basic Disaster Life Support (BDLS)*: This basic course emphasizes an all-hazards approach to mass casualty incident management. This awareness level course is one day in length. All team members are strongly encouraged to take this course.

- *Advanced Disaster Life Support:* This advanced course is a practicum for those who have successfully completed the BDLS course. It prepares participants for mass casualty decontamination, use of personal protective equipment, essential disaster skills, and mass casualty incident communication. This course uses simulated scenarios, interactive sessions and drills with high-fidelity mannequins and volunteer patients to provide a true-to-like practical experience in treatment and response. The course is presented over 2 days. Clinicians and “Team Leaders” are strongly encouraged to complete this course.

Members are occasionally asked to complete online educational modules to improve their knowledge base in topics such as:

- Psychological First Aid,
- Chemical, biological, and radiological threats,
- Personal preparedness, and
- Influenza.

Workshops and/or in-field training may be held so that the team can learn vital skills such as use of all supplies and equipment and self-supporting activities.

What sort of time commitment should I expect being a member of the Johns Hopkins Go Team?

Training will need to be done on your own time over the course of 6-12 months, and will likely take 1-3 hours per month. Participation in a local event or community project may only require a few hours or days (e.g., educational workshop, vaccination clinic, staffing a local shelter, etc). The typical disaster-related deployment lasts 1-2 weeks. Disaster deployments are uncommon and may only occur once every several years. Team members may decline involvement in a community project or disaster deployment.

Will I get paid to be on the Johns Hopkins Go Team?

There is no monetary compensation for being a member of the Johns Hopkins Go Team MRC. There is no additional compensation for training sessions, although you may receive CME/CEU credit for some of the online or classroom training. In general, officially deployed Go Team members continue to receive their base salary during Go Team activities.

What sort of community projects might the Johns Hopkins Go Team MRC do?

In addition to responding to large scale disasters or other public health emergencies, the JH MRC may be involved on the local level as well (within the hospital system or the broader community) in order to provide more frequent training and response opportunities to our members. Possible community-based events might include staffing influenza immunization clinics, assisting with disaster exercises and drills, participating in community health fairs, or staffing a local emergency shelter.

Has the Go Team ever deployed to an actual disaster?

Yes. The first official Go Team deployment was in response to the Haiti earthquake in 2010. Fourteen Go Team members were deployed over a 5 week period. The first team in field worked at a damaged hospital in Port-au-Prince, and the other two teams worked with the military on the USNS Comfort, the US Navy's hospital ship.

The Johns Hopkins Go Team has also partnered with the Navy in their ongoing humanitarian mission in Central/South America (Continuing Promise). Collaboration during non-disaster times allows Go Team members to provide humanitarian assistance, gain experience in delivering healthcare to underdeveloped nations and in austere conditions, and to become familiar with Navy customs, standard operating procedures, and mission priorities. Twenty Go Team members have participated in Continuing Promise, deploying for two weeks each aboard the USS Iwo Jima (2010) and the USNS Comfort (2011).

For more information on these Go Team deployments, please visit the Go Team website.

What is it like in a disaster area?

Deployment to a disaster zone can be very rewarding. However, there are significant physical and mental challenges associated with deployment. All potential members of the Hopkins Go Team should be aware of the following:

- Disaster zones are inherently dangerous.
- The team may be sleeping in tents, on cots and/or on the floor.
- Climate control (air conditioning, heat) and showers are not guaranteed.
- The team may face extreme weather.
- The team may be required to filter or treat water.
- Food may consist of military rations or dehydrated meals, and mealtimes may be erratic.
- Members should expect to work long hours in stressful situations.
- Communication with family members at home may be limited.
- Team members should be of reasonable health and fitness in order to be deployed to a disaster zone.

I'm interested in community service but not in deploying to a disaster zone. Should I still apply for the Go Team?

Absolutely!

Who do I contact if I have other questions?

Please email CEPAR@jhmi.edu if you have further questions. We will get back to you as soon as possible.



The Johns Hopkins Office of Critical
Event Preparedness and Response

