

## PRE-DEPLOYMENT PREPARATION PACKET

**VERSIONS:****July 22, 2020: Original****Pre-Deployment Medical Considerations**

First and foremost, thank you for considering a deployment during this unprecedented time in the U.S. Your health and safety are our top priority when considering a deployment out of your normal area of work. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and upcoming hurricane season have created more awareness of personal health conditions and their implications while on these types of deployments.

Individuals that have chronic health conditions should be aware that while no increased risk of contracting COVID-19 exists, the progression of the illness may be more severe and/or prolonged with the medical conditions listed below.

Validated data currently indicates that individuals who are ***immunocompromised*** should not voluntarily expose themselves to any high-risk conditions. According to the most recently updated guidelines from the CDC, people of any age with the following conditions are at an increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19:

- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Obesity (body mass index of 30 or higher)
- Serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
- Sickle cell disease
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus

Other conditions to consider include:

- Cerebrovascular disease
- Chronic lung conditions (asthma, cystic fibrosis, pulmonary fibrosis)
- Endocrine disorders including Type 1 Diabetes
- Autoimmune disorders
- Hematologic disorders
- Mental health conditions that include PTSD, anxiety, and depression

If you have questions regarding whether deployment might adversely impact your condition or interfere with treatment, please contact your personal medical provider for guidance. Similarly, if you feel that your condition might negatively impact your ability to function during deployment in combination with long work hours, numerous stressors and significant potential trauma exposure, we urge you to seek medical advice prior to committing to deploy.

Please be aware that if you are or have experienced any new or worsening symptoms of COVID-19 within the last 14 days or have had contact with a known COVID-19 individual without proper PPE, you will be ineligible to deploy:

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COVID-19 Symptoms include:

- Fever (>100.4F)
- Persistent Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Loss of Taste or Smell
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea

We care about you and your colleagues personal physical and mental health. As with everything we do, adequately preparing for a potential deployment is a critical part of protecting each other. Your personal healthcare provider should be your trusted source for specific guidance related to your condition.

For more information on high risk medical conditions please follow this link to the CDC website: [COVID-19 CDC](#)

### GMR Resources for Deployment Personnel

*Your well-being is GMR's priority. We have built supports and tools to for you to utilize before, during and after deployment. Please find them summarized here.*

An on-the-ground **WELLNESS OFFICER** and **DEPLOYMENT PEER SUPPORTER** will be available for each deployment site. Check the [Deployed Team Resources page](#) for contact info and additional resources:

If you would like to connect with **CHAPLAIN** services directly and confidentially please utilize this site <http://www.telechaplain.net/> Select one of the current on-duty chaplains and call the number that pops up. Or make an online request for call back at <http://www.tele-chap.com/>

If you would like to connect with a **MENTAL HEALTH CLINICIAN** for a remote appointment (covered by GMR), please call Brower Psychological at 720.222.3400 (select option 2 if after hours for immediate connection to the on-call clinician) or schedule via the online scheduler at [www.BrowerPsychological.com/Contact](http://www.BrowerPsychological.com/Contact)

There is a Deployed Team Resources group on **FACEBOOK** that is packed with deployment related information and allows connection with others who have are or are currently deployed: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/527389104565823>

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**Items for Mobilized Employees to Consider**

- Ensure you have been fit-tested for N95 mask.
- Ensure you remove any facial hair to provide for an effective mask seal.
- Ensure you are proficient at [donning & doffing PPE](#).
- Visit [GMR's Emerging Infectious Diseases page](#) to stay up-to-date on the latest practices related to Covid-19.
- Ensure all licenses & certifications are up to date (unless an extension has been granted).
- Ensure any relevant immunizations are up to date, such as Tdap, Hepatitis B, & MMR.
- Log into Workday or Oracle and ensure your emergency contacts are up to date.
- If you are taking prescription medications be sure to bring twice the expected mobilization time of your medication. Situations are dynamic, and you don't want to be without.
- If you wear glasses, be sure to bring a spare pair.
- Check the weather forecast and seasonal temperature ranges for your deployment site. Pack accordingly.
- Items to consider packing in addition to your uniforms include: non-perishable snacks, jacket/hoodie, shoes and clothes for running/walking/workout, your daily toiletries, ear plugs, sleep mask/eye cover, phone charger, ear buds, chargers for any portable devices, a notebook/journal, pens, some cash, credit/debit card, sunscreen, hat, lip balm, rain jacket, a small backpack/bag to carry personal items on shift, water bottle, a multi-tool, Ziploc bags (so handy), your ID, sunglasses, hand lotion (your hands will get dry from sanitizing...) and extra prescription medication (and ibuprofen, acetaminophen or other meds you might need) if applicable. Hand sanitizer and portable wipes are a good idea too, if you can find them.
- In the case of illness or injury, designating a healthcare proxy ahead of time allows a family member to make medical decisions on your behalf if you cannot make them yourself.
- A limited power of attorney grants specified permissions to a designated person to make decisions on your behalf. Consider granting a limited POA to a trusted family member to execute financial decisions for you (i.e., access certain financial records, access funds to pay bills for you, etc.) should anything unexpected occur.
- Consider using the Family Preparedness Guide, Personal PAIP, and Digital Audit Form found on the [Survivors Network website](#).
- Ensure you focus on your own health & well-being: Sleep, hydration, good nutrition, stress management and exercise during any downtime you can get can help bolster your ability to stay healthy during deployments. For more GMR resources, please [visit GMR Caregiver Well-Being](#).
- Mindfulness apps such as [Ten Percent Happier](#) (offering free access to EMS workers) and [Headspace](#) can help you integrate recovery practices into your day:

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### Situational Awareness

Your safety is our highest priority. With that in mind please maintain a heightened level of situational awareness and avoid putting yourselves in harm's way as you respond to our country's hardest hit communities. Here are some simple but powerful steps to take to protect yourselves and your partners. [GMR COVID-19 Security Guidelines](#)

### Fatigue: How to Recognize, Manage and Limit

As you continue with disaster relief efforts, please pause to consider the impact of fatigue on safety, operations, and your health. Fatigue, common in routine operations, is enhanced in disaster situations. Operational requirements mandate many of the practices that we know can contribute to fatigue. This makes it imperative that you stay on top of your health and manage your fatigue as best possible on a daily basis to minimize cumulative fatigue that can hinder your health and performance.

Operations are running 24/7. Most shifts run 16 hours or more and may rotate. PPE requirements are strict and essential to your safety. You may be running on less than recommended hours of sleep and may find your sleep periods being timed outside your usual sleep schedule. The work is mentally and physically demanding, and you will likely experience greater psychological stressors than in your usual course of work. You may find many of the things you see upsetting or overwhelming. It may take you some time to figure out operations, the work environment and how best for you to operate. This adjustment period may be unsettling.

Signs that someone is being impacted by fatigue include:

- Difficulty concentrating
- Irritability
- Slow reactions
- Frequent yawning
- Drowsiness/Nodding off
- Restlessness
- Hallucinations
- Carelessness
- Reddening of the eyes

These tips can help you minimize fatigue and maximize your rest periods:

- Stay well hydrated (carry a water bottle).
- Eat healthy foods that sustain you for longer periods (good mix of fat, protein, healthy carbs).
- Avoid energy drinks and sugar, both are quick pick-me-ups that lead to subsequent crashes.
- Avoid excessive caffeine- it can impair restful sleep even hours after you consume it. Remember alcohol is not allowed while on deployment and contrary to popular belief, it usually adds to stress rather than lessening it.
- Avoid caffeine within 6 hours of your sleep time.
- Get some exercise (movement and time outdoors can be restorative).
- Stretching regularly relieves muscle tension and calms the nervous system.

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- When something bothers you, find someone to talk it out with (peer support line or a trusted person on the ground). Don't let it build up.
- If possible, create a good sleeping space that is cool, dark and quiet. A room fan/AC, ear plugs and sleep mask or eye cover can help with this.
- Quick naps (20-30 mins) whenever you can catch them are very restorative.
- If you feel that your current level of fatigue is dangerous, contact your supervisor for options

Thank you for all your hard work—please take good care of yourselves and each other. We are here to support you and your wellness.