



Town of Fairfield

Sands L. Cleary
Director of Health

Fairfield, Connecticut 06824
Health Department

Sullivan Independence Hall
725 Old Post Road
(203) 256-3020
FAX (203) 256-3080

TO: Board of Health, Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, RTM

FROM: Sands Cleary, Director of Health

SUBJECT: Request from the Director of Health for an increase in the estimated revenue for Federal Grants in the amount of \$5,000 to cover the cost of Fairfield's continued efforts to further develop the Fairfield-Easton Medical Reserve Corps (FEMRC) and to promote the integration of the MRC unit into the local public health and emergency response system; and further resolved that the First Selectman is authorized to make, execute, and approve on behalf of the Town of Fairfield, any and all contracts or amendments thereof with the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) to conduct activities described in the NACCHO-MRC Capacity-Building Award with an anticipated contract period of September 15, 2012 – September 15, 2013. These costs are 100% reimbursable.

DATE: September 12, 2012

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- I. Background:** On November 1, 2006, the Office of the Surgeon General's Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Program, announced the availability of capacity-building funding for local MRC units. Funding in the amount of \$10,000 per MRC unit was applied for and received by the Fairfield Easton Medical Reserve Corps. This funding has been used to support the development of the MRC and to promote its integration into their local public health and emergency response systems. In 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 the Office of the Surgeon General's Medical Reserve Corps Program announced the continuation these awards in the amount of \$5000 for further capacity-building. This additional funding was awarded and has been utilized develop the capacities of the MRC as detailed in Section II. This additional funding is to be utilized to further our efforts to develop the capacities of the MRC as detailed in Section III.

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), under contract with the Surgeon General's Office of the Civilian Volunteer Medical

Reserve Corps, will be administering all aspects of the award and providing oversight for completion of all requirements of the award contract.

The Fairfield Easton Medical Reserve Corps (FE-MRC) received federal recognition on March 25, 2005, becoming the 4th MRC in Connecticut. The Fairfield Easton MRC quickly became the largest MRC in Connecticut more than 525 members (350 medical members and 175 non-medical members). Initially the majority of the Fairfield Easton Medical Reserve Corps activity had been supported through the CDC Public Health Preparedness funding the Health Department has been receiving since 2002. Since the initiation of the Capacity-Building Awards, the unit's activity has been supported from that funding and is supplemented with regional MRC funding from the CT Department of Emergency Management and the CT Department of Public Health.

The primary role of the Fairfield Easton Medical Reserve Corps is to assist the Fairfield and Easton Health Departments in times of public health emergencies with the mass dispensing of vaccines or antibiotics or with the mass care/shelter needs of the residents of Fairfield and Easton. In our efforts to achieve the group's primary role, we have been involved in the following recent activities. Participated in the July 28th, 2012 Shelter Exercise providing medical screening and care. Participated in the June 26th, 2012 Field Dispensing of Antibiotics Exercise at Sherwood Island. During the October 2011 Winter Storm members volunteered to support special needs and general shelters Danbury, Middletown and Wethersfield. During the 2011 Tropical Storm Irene 35 MRC members assisted with the 2-day operation of the Fairfield's shelter; the largest shelter in Fairfield's history. In May of 2011 the members participated in a federal mass dispensing exercise in which the unit had the most robust response of all participating towns with 126 volunteers responding in 45 minutes indicating their availability to staff a mass dispensing site the later same day. In June of 2011 we will hold our 6th Annual Education Session (AES) where sessions include Psychological First Aid, Personal and Family Preparedness, Worker Safety/Universal Precautions and a Psychological First Aid exercise. During the March 2010 storms MRC members staffed the call-in center for residents to report storm related damage; the storm was eventually declared a federal disaster. During the 09/10 H1N1 Pandemic, members of the MRC assisted with the clinics to deliver the vaccine to the towns of Fairfield and Easton. In June of 2010 the MRC held its Annual Education Session in which volunteers obtained a Sheltering Certificate from the American Red Cross enabling them to assist with the communities sheltering needs. On May 6th and 7th, 2009 we held our MRC Annual Education Session with over 100 MRC members attending each night. On the first evening attendees participated in a Point of Dispensing tabletop exercise developed by the Cambridge Public Health Advanced Practice Center. On the second evening there was a presentation on "Communicating During Emergencies with Individual with Diminished Hearing". On December 16th, 2008 members of the MRC joined together with Fairfield's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) to fully staff a full scale dispensing exercise at one of the Health

Department's annual flu clinics. Only two town staff provided oversight demonstrating the ability for the town's well trained volunteers to provide essential services to our residents during times of emergencies. On June 11th, 2008 we held our MRC Annual Education Session with over 60 MRC members attending a talk entitled "Point of Dispensing – What You Should Know" and then provided a Smallpox Vaccinator Train-the-Trainer Session for 45 medical volunteers. On October 11, 2007 the Fairfield Health Department officially activated 32 members of the Fairfield Easton Medical Reserve Corps under Connecticut's General Statutes (CGS Chapter 28) for the purposes of training through a mass dispensing exercise. This was Connecticut's first official activation of an MRC unit by the CT Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security. This official activation provided both medical and non-medical volunteers the legal/liability protection to perform their various roles. Thirty two MRC members served as the vast majority of POD's medical and non-medical staff. On this day 1618 doses of influenza vaccine were distributed in the ten operational hours with a peak vaccination rate of 378 per hour. Numerous other activities have been performed.

II. Purpose and Justification:

The ability for any community to respond to a large-scale public health emergency, which may involve mass dispensing of vaccine or antibiotics or the mass sheltering of individuals, will undoubtedly require the assistance of large numbers of medical and non-medical volunteers. Having a large group of pre-event identified, trained and credentialed volunteers as well as the ability to efficiently contact and mobilize them is critical to the success of any response. The Fairfield Easton Medical Reserve Corps and the Fairfield Health Department currently provide this resource and the needed capacities for the towns of Fairfield and Easton.

III. Detailed Description of Proposal

Consistent with guidance provided in the award application materials we propose to utilize the funding to continue our efforts in the following areas:

- To work on developing focused leadership groups within the MRC to focus on specific shelter response functions such as medical screening, medical care, behavioral health assistance, mass feeding and other roles to assist in shelter
- To work on conversion to a web based MRC database.
- To enhance sheltering equipment and technology
- To provide funding for our Annual Education and Training Session
- Incentives for volunteers for completion of recommended FEMA ICS/NIMS Online training courses.

While all the above may not be achievable with the proposed award amount these represent the efforts we will pursue if awarded. This additional award would greatly assist us in our effort to improve our communities' public health preparedness and to continue to integrate the FEMRC into our area's public health emergency response system.

Our proposal is to utilize existing staff positions assigned to public health emergency preparedness to coordinate the above activities and to utilize grant monies to fund MRC member training and technology improvements.

Proposed Budget

MRC Project Coordinator	P/T staff to assist with achieving improved MRC capacity in the areas proposed.	\$2500
Equipment, Uniforms and shelter resources	MRC shirts and vests, shelter carts and equipment.	\$2,000
Training and Exercises	Supplies for training and exercise	\$500
	Total	\$5,000

- IV. **Reliabilities of Estimated Costs:** During the first 6 years of the capacity building awards we have funded training activities and technical improvements and upgrades related to our public health volunteers. This history we believe provides us with a reliable estimate of the costs to be incurred.
- V. **Conducive to Increased Efficiency or Productivity:** The objective is to better prepare the country by improving the ability of each community to respond to public health emergencies in order to reduce morbidity and mortality for its residents.
- VI. **Additional Long-Range Costs:** **None are known at this time.**
- VII. **Additional Use or Demand on Existing Facilities:** None anticipated.
- VIII. **Alternatives to this Request:** Funds are going to all eligible MRC units in US.
- IX. **Safety and Loss Control:** None.
- X. **Environmental Consideration:** None.
- XI. **Insurance:** None.
- XII. **Financing:** 100% reimbursable by the 2012-2013 Capacity-Building Award.
- XIII. **Other Considerations:** None.
- XIV. **Other Approvals:** Board of Health, Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, RTM