



Call for Volunteers – Frequently Asked Questions (updated 5/7/2020)

When should I plan to deploy?

You should only travel to the destination once you have been contacted by official governmental representatives, who will inform you when and where to go.

Should I just go and sign up there?

No, once you have completed the state's volunteer form, the government representatives from that state, will only contact individuals that are selected.

What should I pack?

Government representatives will provide you with specific information, but you should ensure you have proof of licensure with you.

It's been several days since I signed up and no one has contacted me yet.

Selection is based on location, language, clinical expertise and other factors. Not everyone will be called. You may be contacted later for deployment - if you are still interested and available.

What will be expected of me?

You will be expected to provide care for critically ill or injured patients. These may or may not be patients with infectious diseases.

What if I can only stay for a limited time?

You are free to leave at any point in the assignment. If you have time constraints that you are aware of, inform the governmental contact upfront or as soon as you become aware of them.

What if I volunteer and find out that I can't go?

You are under no obligation to go if you are unable. You are free to decline the opportunity should your circumstances change.

How will it be determined who will get called?

Government representatives will match skills/specialties with current needs and contact the appropriate individuals.

What are the special skill sets needed?

Requests to SCCM are specific for ICU clinicians. Certifications, experience and other information will be used to make selections and assignments. Language skills are also considered.

Who pays for my hotel, airfare, mileage and other costs associated with volunteering?

Airfare, hotel reservations, and other travel expenses are typically the responsibility of the volunteer. However, in some instances these may be provided or partially reimbursed. Discuss this with the representative when you are contacted so you clearly understand your financial responsibility before you deploy.

Will I receive housing, food, and other support onsite?

In some instances, relief volunteers receive support for onsite expenses from the local government, the American Red Cross and other agencies. Discuss this with the governmental representative when you are contacted and be sure you understand your financial obligations before you agree to travel.



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Are there other costs I should consider?

Some states have taxes based on payments received during the volunteer service period. These may include taxes on payments received to support your volunteer activity (honoraria, etc.) or payments received from your home institution while working at the emergency response site. Ask the governmental representative for clarification on this when you are contacted and be sure you understand your financial obligations before you agree to travel.

Do I need to be concerned about liability?

Volunteer clinicians may be eligible for liability protection under both state and federal law. The Volunteer Protection Act of 1997: Volunteers of a Nonprofit or Governmental Entity (VPA) was enacted to provide minimum protections for healthcare volunteers. [More information can be found here.](#)

I am a resident, fellow and trainee, am I eligible to volunteer?

Medical fellows and residents that have an NPI number are usually eligible to volunteer. Medical students and other trainees are not.

I am working on an H1B or other visa at my institution. Am I permitted to volunteer?

Typically, individuals working on an H1B or similar US visa have limited ability to work outside of their sponsoring institution. These individuals are also at additional risk because they may become disabled or unable to work because of their volunteer service, which could negatively impact visa status for them and their families. For this reason, individuals who are not citizens of the US or holding a valid Green Card should not volunteer without seeking the advice of a qualified immigration attorney.

How long am I expected to volunteer?

You will discuss the length of your volunteer service with the government representative before departing. Volunteer assignments are flexible regarding length of service.

Will I be required to quarantine pre/post volunteering?

There currently is no quarantine period for volunteer healthcare workers prior to the assignment but discuss this with the government representative when you are contacted. Your own institutional policies will determine if you must quarantine upon your return. Discuss this with your employer.

When should I expect to hear back from SCCM?

If you volunteered through the SCCM system, your information will be transferred to the agency requesting volunteers and those who are selected will be contacted directly by a government representative. The government representative will only contact those they chose based on skills and specialties needed. It is possible that you may not be contacted. SCCM is not notified of who the government agency selects for volunteer service.

How can I withdraw my application for volunteering?

You are under no obligation to participate. You are free to decline the opportunity should your circumstances change. You should notify the government representative when they contact you. SCCM does not collect your information from the state's volunteer form.