Medical Countermeasure (MCM) Technical Assistance Action Plan Guidance

Overview

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Division of State and Local Readiness (DSLR), is collaborating with Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) program recipients to complete medical countermeasure (MCM) technical assistance action plans that will help their jurisdictions become established on or before June 30, 2022. The action plans focus on activities designed to address prioritized MCM planning and operational gaps identified during a jurisdiction's most recent Operational Readiness Review (ORR) or self-assessment. Similarly, state recipients must develop MCM action plans for all of their Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) local planning jurisdictions.

Submission Requirements

PHEP recipients must submit action plans to CDC twice each budget period and participate in quarterly conference calls with CDC to discuss action plan activities. State recipients must develop MCM action plans for all of their CRI local planning jurisdictions, conduct quarterly conference calls, and submit updated MCM action plans to CDC twice each budget period. The deadlines for action plan submissions in the current budget period are as follows:

Action Plan Submission Deadline
December 31, 2018
June 28, 2019

Reminders

- All action items should be prioritized to become “established” on or before June 30, 2022.
- Subject matter experts, including U.S. Marshals, may be invited to these quarterly conference calls for support.
- Official signatures are not required.

Step 1: Download the action plan

The MCM action plan template is available for download in CDC's Online Technical Resource and Assistance Center (On-TRAC) under the Hot Topics section. If assistance is required, jurisdictions can contact their CDC MCM specialists.

Step 2: Complete your action plan

The action plan is a PDF fillable form that includes blanks for open-ended sections and drop-down lists that make creating an update easy and quick.

To start, complete the top section of the MCM action plan, which identifies your jurisdiction and submission date. Select your jurisdiction from the drop-down and enter the submission date. If you are a not a Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) jurisdiction, type the name of your jurisdiction in the data field.

Second, complete the "Action Items" section of your MCM action plan. Action items are the high-level goals your preparedness program would like to achieve in its efforts to address gaps identified during your most recent ORR or self-assessment. These items are intended to remain the same over a budget period or until all action activities within each action item are completed. The "Action Items" section contains the following data fields; "Item #," "ORR Form," "ORR Status" and "Action Item Description" data fields.

Third, on the "Action Activity" section, include specific activities that will enable you to complete the identified action item. The "Action Activity" section contains the following data fields; "Activity #," "Capability," "Technical Assistance (TA) Requested", "Target Date," and "Activity Description" and "Status updates."

To add or remove an action item or activity, select the "Add Action Item/Activity" or "Remove Action Item/Activity" box on the bottom of the page. You should include three to five action items with appropriate or specific action activities for each. After your initial submission, please do not "Remove" an action item or activity already reported on, instead update the status to reflect the current situation for example, canceled, paused, or completed.

Note – Prioritize ORR elements that directly contribute to ORR implementation status in the action plan. These elements are identified in the ORR Guidance at the end of each form in a section titled "What impacts achieving established status?" If a jurisdiction has already reached "established" on all three elements (descriptive, planning, and operations), other inputs may be considered, including technical application review comments, observations from receipt, stage, store (RSS) site visits, improvement items from exercises or incidents, and strategic priorities of the jurisdiction.

Step 3: Rename and save your action plan

Once you have completed your plan, save it using one of the following naming structures prior to submission.

Recipients	Nomenclature	Example
Local	State_County OR Region_Year_Quarter	GA_Dist1.1_2018_Q2 OH_Medina_2018_Q2
State	State_Year_Quarter	GA_ 2018_Q2
Territories and freely associated states (TFAS)	US_Territory_Year_Quarter	US_VirginIslands_ 2018_Q2 PR_2018_Q2

Step 4: Submit the action plan

Locals – E-mail completed action plans to your state MCM coordinator for review.

States, directly funded localities (DFLs), and TFAS – E-mail completed action plans to your Atlanta-based and regional CDC MCM specialists for review.

NOTE: States should use the checklist below to ensure CRI jurisdiction MCM action plans are correctly filled out before submission to the Atlanta-based and regional CDC MCM specialists.

MCM Action Plan Submission Checklist

Local CRI jurisdiction action plan

- ☐ Completed action plan form
  - ☐ Selected submission date
  - ☐ Selected jurisdiction
  - ☐ Identified at least three action items
  - ☐ Drafted action activities
- ☐ Saved action plan according to nomenclature above (example: "State _City/Region/District_ Year_Quarter")
- ☐ E-mailed action plan to state MCM coordinator
- ☐ Reviewed action plan (state)
- ☐ E-mailed action plan to Atlanta-based and regional CDC MCM specialist

State or territory action plan

- ☐ Completed action plan form
  - ☐ Selected quarter
  - ☐ Selected jurisdiction
  - ☐ Identified at least three action items
  - ☐ Drafted action activities
  - ☐ Saved action plan according to nomenclature above (example: “State_Quarter_Date” or “US _TFAS_Date”)
- ☐ E-mailed action plan to Atlanta-based and regional CDC MCM specialists

Form Fields

Jurisdiction

A drop-down list of planning areas, such as directly funded localities, states, territories and freely associated states. If you are a non-CRI jurisdiction, type the name of your jurisdiction in the data field.

Submission date

Date the action plan is submitted to Atlanta-based and regional CDC MCM specialists or state reviewer.

Action item

Action items are high-level MCM goals that the PHEP recipient would like to achieve to address the gaps identified in their most recent ORR or self-assessment. Items should be broad objectives that can be accomplished by completing multiple, smaller action activities that build up to achieve the action item. If you've had an ORR recently, then the action items should address the "questions/operation" section of the ORR report. The action item could also be used to write a new plan, complete a full-scale exercise, or implement a new volunteer management system.

Item

Number associated to action item.

Operational Readiness Review (ORR) forms

A drop-down list of ORR forms related to the action item. If you have had an ORR conducted, select the associated ORR form from the ORR Site Visit Report. If you have not had an ORR conducted, select the primary ORR form that is related to the action item, or select "Other" from the drop-down list.

Descriptive/Demographic

- **Jurisdictional data sheet (JDS)** – The JDS gathers information about the jurisdiction's population and staffing to support MCM distribution and dispensing.

- **Critical contact sheet (CCS)** – The CCS is used to maintain accurate, up-to-date information on essential personnel. For example, the Division of Strategic National Stockpile (DSNS) can consult this information when a request to ship materiel is received.

- **Receipt, stage, store (RSS) site survey** – The RSS site survey provides situational awareness about potential MCM storage facilities. It is used to validate whether a site is appropriate to receive, store, and distribute MCM assets. The type of information collected on the RSS form includes physical facility and surrounding area detail, security considerations, staffing information, and environmental controls, including cold chain management.

- **Point-of-dispensing (POD) site** – The POD form is used to maintain accurate, up-to-date information about open POD locations, population served, and staffing necessary to support dispensing activities. The information can be used to identify staffing shortages and opportunities for technical assistance.

Planning

- **Dispensing** – The dispensing planning form provides insight into procedures for handling medical materiel management and dispensing. While the primary questions address those components, additional questions from other related capabilities inform situational awareness and include Capability 1: Community Preparedness; Capability 4: Emergency Public Information and Warning; Capability 14: Responder Safety and Health; and Capability 15: Volunteer Management. Questions from additional capabilities should be answered based on overall PHEP planning, as applicable, to strengthen MCM plans.

- **Distribution** – The distribution planning form provides insight into procedures for handling medical materiel management and distribution. While the primary questions address those components, additional questions from Capability 3: Emergency Operations Coordination are included for related situational awareness. Questions not specific to handling medical materiel management and distribution should be answered based on overall PHEP planning as applicable to strengthen the MCM plans.

Operational

- **Facility setup drill** – The facility setup drill form provides information on operational ability to stand up a site with the necessary materiel, layout, and supplies for timely distribution and dispensing. Drill information should be completed for each facility set up.

- **Staff notification and assembly drill** – The staff notification and assembly drill form provides information on operational function specific to staff notification and assembly procedures for various facilities, including emergency operations centers (EOCs); receipt, stage, store (RSS) facilities; regional distribution sites (RDSs) or local distribution sites (LDSs); and PODs. The drill measures the accuracy of staff rosters, timeliness of staff confirmation to the notification, and staff ability to report for duty within a designated timeframe. Communication methods and processes also are measured. Drill information should be completed for each site notified.

- **Site activation drill** – The site activation drill form provides information on operational function for procedures to open and activate various types of distribution and dispensing facilities. The drill measures the accuracy of site rosters, timeliness of site confirmation to the notification, and site function within a designated timeframe. Communication methods and processes also are measured. Drill information should be completed for each site notified.

- **Training and exercise planning** – The training and exercise planning form standardizes the collection of areas for improvement identified in the training and exercise planning workshop (TEPW). It allows for the monitoring of exercise program priorities used to develop the multiyear training and exercise plan (MYTEP). It also can inform technical assistance activities. The information collected outlines the plans to address specific threats and hazards, identified areas for improvement, and public health preparedness capabilities. The form does not replace the MYTEP document.

- **Dispensing full-scale exercise (FSE) or incident** – The dispensing FSE or incident form provides information on operational function specific to staff notification and assembly procedures for PODs. The exercise measures the accuracy of staff rosters, timeliness of staff confirmation to the notification, and staff ability to report for duty within a designated timeframe. The exercise also assesses the ability for a complete and timely POD setup with the necessary materiel, layout, and supplies for the general population as well as people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs. In addition, the exercise tests dispensing procedures and verifies estimates of regimens and persons per hour. Lastly, the exercise tests timeliness for developing and releasing public health messages to the public, including people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.

- **Distribution FSE or incident** – The distribution FSE or incident form provides information on operational function specific to staff notification and assembly procedures for EOCs and RSSs. The exercise measures the accuracy of staff rosters, timeliness of staff confirmation to the notification, and staff ability to report for duty within a designated timeframe. The form also provides information on operational function specific to site activation and availability procedures for EOCs to measure the accuracy of site rosters, timeliness of site confirmation to the notification, and site ability to clear a facility for subsequent site setup in a designated timeframe. The exercise also assesses the ability for a complete, timely RSS set up with the necessary materiel, layout, and supplies. Partnerships outlined in written agreements also are verified through the inclusion of the receiving sites and transportation assets tested during the MCM distribution exercise or incident. Lastly, the time required for MCM asset and material request, processing, and distribution, as well as security plans for transport, are verified through either the exercise or incident.

- **After-action report (AAR) and improvement plan (IP)** – The AAR and IP form standardizes the information collected from an AAR and IP to evaluate the activity reported. The form does not replace the AAR and IP documents. The form provides critical information required to determine the areas of strength and improvement across the program. The form is not required for drills or tabletop exercises, but should be used for all incidents, functional exercises, and full-scale exercises (not just specific to MCMs).

- **PHEP, functional exercise (FE), or FSE or incident** – The PHEP, FE, or FSE, or incident form provides operational information about EOCs, including staff notification and assembly procedures. Detail about staff roster accuracy, notification, and assembly are collected. Further, EOC procedures, including site activation and availability, are collected. Engagement with stakeholders representing people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs during an activation is collected to fulfill the PHEP program requirement to engage these partners, if relevant, to the exercise or incident. Information provided also might satisfy the joint planning exercise requirements if the Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) and state, regional, or federal emergency management are involved in the incident.

- **Dispensing throughput drill** – The dispensing throughput drill form tests dispensing procedures for pills and verifies estimates of regimens and persons per hour in a given POD. Submission of this form is required only if the dispensing FSE was conducted using a mass-vaccination model.

- **Tabletop exercise (TTX)** – The TTX form standardizes the information collected from a TTX. A TTX is a discussion-based exercise intended to generate discussion of various issues regarding a simulated emergency. TTXs can increase participants' general awareness while validating plans and procedures. Participants also can assess the type of systems needed to prevent, protect against, mitigate negative effects, and recover from a defined incident. TTXs also can help identify strengths and areas for improvement in preparedness plans. Involving stakeholders who represent people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs in a TTX (if relevant to the exercise) will satisfy the annual PHEP requirement to engage these partners.

ORR Status

The ORR status level is based on evaluation criteria referenced in the ORR guidance and assigned in the ORR Site Visit Report. The ORR online data collection system is divided into three modules that assess different content areas of MCM: 1) descriptive and demographic information, 2) planning, and 3) operations. Each module collects information via specific forms within the ORR online system.

Definition of status levels for each ORR module

	Early	Intermediate	Established	In progress
Descriptive	Information not updated	Information updated, but not at the required frequency	Information updated with expected frequency (e.g., six months, one year) NOTE: All forms listed in this module for each jurisdiction must be up-to-date to achieve "established" status.	Not applicable NOTE: The "in progress" status is only applicable for the operational module.
Planning	Little or no evidence of planning is demonstrated	Some or most of expected planning demonstrated	Expected level of planning demonstrated NOTE: All listed items (rows) in the planning form section must be verified with sufficient evidence to achieve ""established" status.	Not applicable NOTE: The "in progress" status is only applicable for the operational module.
Operational	Few or no operational requirements conducted	Some operational requirements conducted	All operational requirements (drills and exercises) conducted in the appropriate timeframe NOTE: All operations indicated with an asterisk must be completed to achieve "established" status.	Annual and five-year requirements not completed yet due to scheduling. No basis for complete assessment at the time of site visit.

Action item description

Action items are entered in the action item description field. For a detailed description of an action item, see above.

Action activity

Action activities are tasks that take small progressive steps toward achieving or completing an action item. Activities could include researching or requesting necessary materials or guidance, collaborating with partners, taking or providing training, or reaching milestones related to completing an action item.

Activity #

The identification number assigned to each ORR-related activity.

Capability

List of CDC's public health preparedness capabilities. Select capability associated with action activity.

Technical assistance (TA) requested

- **Yes** – Yes, TA is requested by the state or CRI jurisdiction for this action activity.
- **No** – No, TA is not being requested for this action activity.

TA type

The "TA type" field references the TA provided by CDC staff to a recipient or the TA provided by the recipient to a local CRI jurisdiction. The "TA Type" field will appear on the form if "Yes" is selected for technical assistance. Definitions of each of the TA types are provided below.

- **In-person** – refers to in-person meetings between the TA provider (CDC or recipient) and the TA requestor. This does not include scheduled site visits.
- **Online** – refers to any systems, tools, websites, or resources that are online and used to provide TA. These online sources could include CDC's Online Technical Resource and Assistance Center (On-TRAC), Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) Technical Resources, Assistance Center, and Information Exchange (TRACIE), National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) Preparedness Toolkit, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) resources, or any other online source.
- **Peer-to-peer** – refers to the TA provider organizing, coordinating, or facilitating a peer-to-peer interface or meeting for the jurisdiction. Peer-to-peer tasks could include an Atlanta-based and a regional CDC MCM specialist organizing a meeting for a recipient to speak with another recipient or the state facilitating a meeting between two (or more) local CRI jurisdictions.
- **Phone** – refers to TA provided via a phone call between the TA provider and the jurisdiction.
- **Site visit** – refers to the completion of a site visit by the TA provider. Site visits can include an ORR site visit, RSS site survey, full-scale exercise participation, or PHEP site visit.
- **Subject matter expert (SME)** – the consultation of an SME by the TA provider, either relaying the necessary information or coordinating a meeting between the jurisdiction and the SME.
- **Training** – refers to the TA provider researching, coordinating, and advising on in-person training helpful to the jurisdiction.
- **Webinar** – refers to TA provided over the Internet via a seminar, class, or other training between the TA provider and the jurisdiction.
- **Other** – any TA type not covered by any of the above tasks.

Target date

The anticipated date the action activity will be completed.

Activity description

A statement that provides a detailed description of the work to be performed by a jurisdiction.

Status update

The status update section allows updates on a quarterly basis.

Budget period

The budget period associated with the status update.

Quarter

Quarter associated with the status update.

Status

- **Not started** – Activities have not stated.
- **Canceled** – Activities were discontinued.
- **Paused** – Activities are on hold.
- **In progress** – Activities are underway.
- **Completed** – Activities were accomplished.

Progress notes

A note field used to capture details, such as goals accomplished, resources expended, problems encountered, and activity progress.