

Member Recruitment Information

Congratulations! You are reading this because someone considers you a good candidate for inclusion in the Nebraska Behavioral Health Emergency Response Team – which we informally refer to as BHERT. This team of mostly state-affiliated behavioral health professionals is an important resource in times of disaster or large scale emergency. Please review the following list of frequently asked questions, and then go to the Nebraska disaster behavioral health website to learn more about how we organize our state resources so we are ready to respond to the psychological, social, and emotional needs of everyone in our state when disaster strikes.

FAQ

What is the Nebraska Behavioral Health Emergency Response Team (BHERT)?

Nebraska BHERT is a mechanism for organizing and deploying state disaster behavioral health resources.

What does BHERT do?

BHERT provides:

1. Rapid deployment to local areas of behavioral health personnel who are experienced in addressing behavioral health needs, assisting in recovery activities, training, and related assigned tasks.
2. A resource for state-run facilities or operations impacted by disaster (such as Regional Centers or Correctional facilities).
3. A resource of the Governor in the event that behavioral health expertise is requested by another state's governor through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). Team members must opt in before EMAC deployment.
4. Training or consultation to local areas or state-run facilities during preparedness, response, or recovery periods. This is generally handled on a case-by-case basis through the Division of Behavioral Health.

Who is in BHERT?

BHERT consists of personnel experienced in behavioral health services and systems, disaster behavioral health, and subject matter experts. The team features state employees who can be deployed on short notice at the request of the Governor via the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA).

When was BHERT formed?

The Nebraska Emergency Management Act (Neb. Rev. Stat. 81-829.36 to 81-829.75) provides statutory authorization for the formation and use of state Emergency Response Teams. On August 7, 2008, the Governor's Homeland Security Policy Group gave the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) approval to move forward with the formation of a Behavioral Health Emergency Response Team (BHERT) for the State of Nebraska.

Why should I be part of BHERT?

As a state employee working in the behavioral health field, you possess skills that can make a difference for individuals and communities recovering from a disaster.

What is the benefit of being involved with BHERT?

BHERT members receive training in disaster behavioral health areas. Some of the training may be used for continuing education required of licensed mental health professionals. You will receive just-in-time training before you deploy and ultimately will become an asset to your organization with the new skills and experiences you will acquire. You will also be invited to attend the annual Nebraska Disaster Behavioral Health Exercise and periodic trainings related to disaster behavioral health.

What obligation will I have if I become involved with BHERT?

You will be asked to complete the Nebraska Disaster Psychological First Aid training during your first year of BHERT involvement. Each year you will update your contact information and verify that you are still affiliated with a state agency or university if you wish to continue being listed as part of the BHERT team. All BHERT members who are licensed will also be asked to register in the on-line Nebraska medical and health volunteer site:

volunteers.ne.gov/ESAR-VHP/faces/jsp/login.jsp

What happens when BHERT is deployed?

Team members always have the option of declining a deployment. If you are asked to deploy, you will be given information that can be shared with your supervisor so your duties can be temporarily reassigned. When a team is assembled there is an orientation and all information about the deployment will be shared with you. You will generally have a short time (24 to 48 hours) to make arrangements at home and at work for the time you will be in the field. Deployments may be for one day or up to fourteen days (in extreme circumstances).

How do I get involved?

Application materials are available from the Division of Behavioral Health, or you can download them from the BHERT area on the Disaster Behavioral Health website:

disastermh.nebraska.edu/state-team

FOR MORE INFORMATION & AN APPLICATION PACKET, CONTACT:

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