

Iowa Department of Public Health

Iowa Statewide Emergency Registry of Volunteers

Fact Sheet



What is I-SERV?

I-SERV, a preparedness program sponsored by the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), is a statewide secure database of credentialed health care professionals who are interested in volunteering in the event of a public health emergency or disaster. I-SERV manages the recruitment, registration, selection, and potential use of volunteers.

Why is I-SERV necessary?

Spontaneous volunteers can hinder disaster response by creating health, safety, and security issues, distracting responders from their duties, and interfering with response operations. I-SERV was developed to eliminate the issues encountered when seeking to use health care volunteers in a complex emergency response situation and to eliminate these spontaneous volunteers. By registering with I-SERV, volunteers are part of an e-mail alert system and respond only when activated to a disaster or public health emergency.

How does a volunteer register?

Volunteers can access the registration portal through a link at the IDPH Bureau of EMS page at www.idph.state.ia.us/ems. Once registered, a volunteer's credentials will be verified through state and national licensing boards. Of utmost importance is the protection of personal information related to the volunteers. Information will be kept in a manner consistent with all federal and state laws governing security and confidentiality.

How will I-SERV work?

I-SERV will be made available to organizations requesting volunteer healthcare professionals in the event of a public health emergency. The I-SERV database will be used to identify volunteers via queries of variables as defined by the requestor. I-SERV volunteers are never under any obligation to participate in an I-SERV activation. Every attempt will be made to match a volunteer's skills, competencies, and license or registration level with their responsibilities during an I-SERV response. On occasion, however, a volunteer may be asked to assist with activities that are less challenging than their usual professional activities.

Does an I-SERV volunteer have liability protection?

Iowa State laws (Codes 135.147, 669.24 and 613.17) provides that individuals will not be held liable for acts or omissions committed while serving as a state volunteer if: (1) They were acting within the scope of their volunteer responsibilities; (2) They were properly licensed, certified, or authorized by the appropriate authorities for the activity or practice by the State of Iowa, and the activities or practice was undertaken within the scope of their volunteer responsibility; (3) The harm caused is not the result of intentional misconduct or knowing violation of the law, or for a transaction from which the person derives on improper personal benefit.

How are we doing in Iowa?

IDPH continues discussions with neighboring states exploring their healthcare volunteer systems. Information regarding liability, marketing plans, deployment procedures and the handling of out-of-state requests for volunteers have been shared and will be used by the State of Iowa to ensure that our protocols and procedures are as efficient and effective as possible. If you have questions or need more information on the I-SERV program, Use the "contact us" link on the I-SERV website or call the IDPH I-SERV Coordinator at 515-281-0615.

Who should register?

- Physicians
- Psychologists
- Physician Assistants
- Licensed Social Workers
- Advanced Practice Registered Nurses
- Mental Health Counselors
- Registered Nurses
- Radiological Technicians
- Pharmacists
- Radiological Technologists
- Pharmacy Technicians
- Respiratory Therapists
- Medical and Clinical Lab Technicians
- Marriage and Family Therapists
- Medical and Clinical Lab Technologists
- Veterinarians
- Licensed Practical Nurses
- Cardiovascular Technologists and Technicians
- Licensed Vocational Nurses
- Diagnostic Medical Sonographers
- Dentists
- EMS Providers
- Lay and Non-Healthcare
- Medical Records and Health Information Technicians

Licensing Boards that link with I-SERV

State of Iowa

- Board of Nursing
- Professional Licensure (Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists, Mental Health Counselors, Physician Assistants, Psychologists, Respiratory Therapists)
- Board of Dental Examiners
- Board of Pharmacy Examiners
- Board of Medical Examiners
- Board of Veterinary Medicine
- Bureau of Emergency Medical Services
- Bureau of Radiological Health

National

- American Board of Medical Specialties
- American Osteopathic Information Association
- Federation of State Medical Boards
- Drug Enforcement Administration
- Office of Inspector General