


Date: December 21, 2020

From: Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Operations (AUSHO) (15)

Subj: SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19: Guidance for Volunteers during DEMPS Deployments

To: Veterans Integrated Service Network Directors (10N1-23)

1. The Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System (DEMPS) is Veterans Health Administration's (VHA) main deployment program for clinical and non-clinical staff in an emergency or disaster, and has played a critical role in VHA's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. As DEMPS assignments often involve travel and may bring persons from different geographic areas together in one place, there is increased risk of volunteers carrying SARS-CoV-2 infection to the site to which they are deployed. Additionally, there is risk of acquiring infection while on deployment, and passing that infection to others while on assignment or on return.
3. DEMPS volunteers should expect to be tested for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 disease, prior to and at the end of deployment. Volunteers may also be required to undergo screening at the deployment location and may need additional testing if they experience a high-risk exposure to SARS-CoV-2.
4. The attached guidance applies to DEMPS staff who will be physically present at their volunteer post, and does not apply to virtual deployments where no proximity to others is expected.
5. Questions can be submitted to VHA Deployment Operations by email at: vhadeploymentoperations@va.gov .



for
Renee Oshinski

Attachment