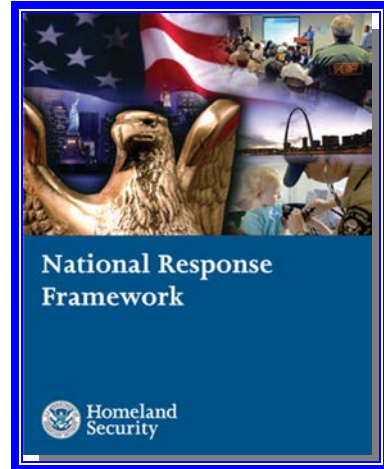


National Preparedness – Everyone’s Priority

I. National Response Framework

After the attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and the anthrax letter incidents, it became increasingly apparent that the federal government must develop an emergency preparedness framework that promotes cooperation and coordination amongst all levels of government and the private sector. As a result, in December 2003, President George W. Bush signed *Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8 (HSPD-8), National Preparedness*. This directive established policies to strengthen the preparedness of the United States to prevent and respond to threatened or actual domestic terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies. Additionally the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) developed the *National Response Framework (NRF)* that established a comprehensive, national, all-hazards approach to domestic incident response. Its guiding principles enable all response partners to prepare for and respond to disasters and emergencies in a unified national response. In implementing HSPD-8, the federal government has released various planning tools and established a variety of funding sources to assist federal agencies, state, local, tribal and private sector organizations in understanding their roles and responsibilities during emergencies and developing the capability to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from emergencies.



The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is the principal federal agency responsible for protecting public health. In 2002, HHS, through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), began awarding funds for public health preparedness activities to states, select cities, the Pacific Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico via a cooperative agreement currently referred to as the Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) Cooperative Agreement. In addition to a variety of key public health related preparedness activities, cooperative agreement recipients are required to develop plans to receive, distribute and dispense medical countermeasures from the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) to their affected populations during an emergency. The SNS is a national repository of critical medical countermeasures and supplies that are available to supplement state and local public health officials during public health emergencies. The items in the SNS are capable of supporting all-hazards emergencies, with a great emphasis on acts of bioterrorism.

As a partner to Metro Public Health Department (MPHD), your organization plays a critical role in our community’s public health preparedness activities. Your willingness to operate a closed point

National Preparedness – Everyone’s Priority

of dispensing or **Worksite POD** during an emergency for your employees and their families and to assist our community demonstrates your organization’s commitment to the national preparedness initiative. Metro Public Health will match your commitment with equal dedication by providing the necessary technical assistance, planning tools and resources to help you develop your **Worksite POD** plan.

Partnering With Public Health

I. Imagine This Scenario . . .

Whether by accident or as part of a terrorist attack, a biological agent such as anthrax has been released and millions of people across the nation are at risk, including those in our community. People need preventive medications immediately, so through the activation of emergency transportation and logistics plans at the federal and state levels, the CDC delivers supplies from the SNS destined for local public health agencies. These life-saving medications are delivered to local public health officials who have activated long-standing and well rehearsed mass prophylaxis plans via “pull and push” methods of dispensing. Most likely given this scenario, local officials will use the traditional “pull” method as its primary dispensing method and encourage the general public, via an extensive public information campaign, to come to identified locations at common areas within the community to receive medications. These locations usually consist of fixed facilities such as schools, arenas, or other public buildings and are most often referred to as open PODs. But, even with extensive preparation there are long lines at every POD site as thousands of people wait in line for their pills. People are stressed about missing work, trying to calm their children as they endure long waits, and anxiety and tempers are starting to flare. Remember, our Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is comprised of approximately 1.4

Mass prophylaxis is the capability to protect the health of the population through the administration of critical interventions in response to a public health emergency in order to prevent the development of disease among those who are exposed or are potentially exposed to public health threats.

The Strategic National Stockpile (SNS)

- A national repository of medications and medical supplies to be used for emergency situations such as a bioterrorism attack or natural disaster
- Designed to supplement and re-supply state and local health and medical resources

million people and everyone may have been exposed to anthrax, so the local health departments will have to provide the necessary medication to the entire population in less than 48 hours.

If this type of scenario were to ever occur, public health officials must be ready to respond. To help meet this 48-hour timeframe, local officials across the nation are working with various organizations

within their communities and establishing partnerships to develop innovative alternate dispensing options to enhance the dispensing capability.

Partnering With Public Health

II. Setting Expectations – What Can You Expect?

Current MPH D Planning Efforts

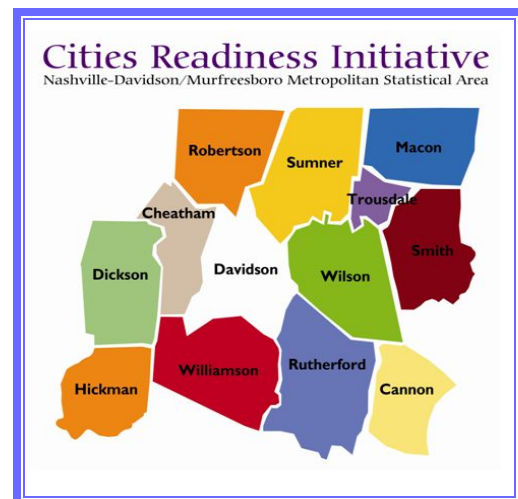
Local public health agencies in the Nashville–Davidson/Murfreesboro MSA region have created plans which identify sites and resources that can support POD operations during a public health emergency. Each site has been evaluated to ensure that it is appropriate for such use, facility use agreements have been developed and signed and plans have been made for all aspects of establishing the POD, including:

- Communicating with the public
- Communicating with emergency responders (police, fire and EMS)
- Transportation medicines and supplies to each site
- Floor plans and client flow patterns for dispensing at each site
- Security and safety precautions
- Staffing needs including medical professionals and volunteers
- Necessary supplies



How Worksite PODs Fit into Mass Prophylaxis

Worksite PODs will play an important role in any situation where it is necessary to provide emergency medications to large groups of people. Traditional medical providers, such as hospitals and medical clinics, will likely be overwhelmed during a large-scale public health emergency. The PODs established to support the public will also be highly stressed in a situation where the entire population needs medication within a short time frame. Worksite PODs will help relieve some of the pressure by reaching specific portions of the



Partnering With Public Health

community. As a result, long lines and public anxiety can be reduced and resources can be used more efficiently.

By partnering with public health and operating a **Worksite POD**, your employees and their family members will receive medications at your facility which reduces the likelihood of having to visit the open PODs. This will provide peace of mind during this crisis because they know that their employer has taken the “extra step” and conducted the necessary coordination and planning prior to an event to provide an alternative method to protect them during an anthrax emergency.

Operating a **Worksite POD** will ultimately help organizations with their continuity of operations plans by aiding them in becoming more resilient during and after an emergency. Their employees will be able to return to their normal duties within the organization more quickly, or continue to assist public health officials through volunteering.

Worksite PODs provide:

- Ease of access to life-saving medications
- Quick dispensing of medications to your employees and their families
- Enhanced continuity of operations

III. Establishing Responsibilities

Public Health Responsibilities

Metro Public Health will work with your organization to ensure that you have the necessary information and resources to establish a **Worksite POD**. As with all preparedness activities, the more we communicate and exercise our response plans now, the better we will respond if an emergency occurs.

Metro Public Health Responsibilities:

- Provide pre-event planning and technical assistance, including but not limited to policies, procedures, job aids such as example POD layouts, fact sheets, dispensing algorithms, forms, and other information necessary to successfully operate a **Worksite POD**.
- Assist your organization in the development of internal training and exercises to open and run a **Worksite POD**.
- Provide medication and forms during an emergency.
- During an event, provide emergency contact information for key preparedness personnel at Metro Public Health.
- Provide your organization with tools and templates to effectively plan to run a **Worksite POD** during a public health emergency.
- Notify your organization of the need to activate your **Worksite POD** plan.
- Provide media guidance during a public health emergency to ensure consistency of messages between their designated dispensing population and the general public.
- Collect any unused medications as well as copies of all medical documentation after the dispensing process has been completed and the **Worksite POD** has been deactivated.

The challenge for government officials, working with the private sector, nongovernmental organizations, and individual citizens, is to determine the best way to build capabilities for bolstering preparedness...the “best way” will vary across the Nation.
National Preparedness Guidelines

Partnering With Public Health

Your Organization's Responsibilities

Metro Public Health will help you prepare for your **Worksite POD**, but there are steps you must take to ensure the proper plans are in place to establish and operate a **Worksite POD** efficiently.

Worksite PODS's Responsibilities:

- Designate staff to work with Metro Public Health in planning for the operation of a **Worksite POD**.
- Provide primary and secondary 24-hour emergency points of contact to ensure timely notification and activation of your **Worksite POD** during a public health emergency.
- Develop a **Worksite POD** plan and provide a copy and periodic updates to Metro Public Health.
- Identify **Worksite POD** locations for your organization.
- Maintain the necessary supplies and equipment needed to operate a **Worksite POD**.
- Dispense medications following protocols and guidance provided by Metro Public Health.
- Participate in training and exercise opportunities conducted by Metro Public Health as available.

“Our partnership with public health, like our partnerships with other community efforts, is another way we feel connected to the communities we live in”

*Stasha Wyskiel, Manager
Business Continuity Planning, Gap Inc*

IV. Understanding the Dispensing Process

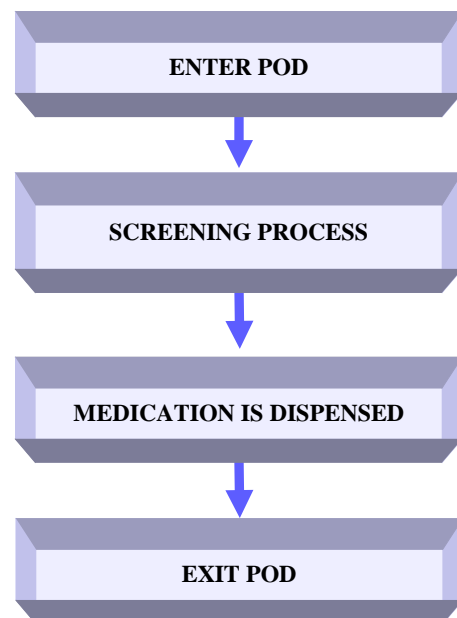
Developing a plan to dispense medication to a large number of people at first glance appears to be extremely challenging, especially for non-public health professionals. Rest assured that the Metro Public Health Department understands the challenges you face and is committed to walking you through the process, step by step to help you develop a comprehensive, responsive **Worksite POD** plan that not only supports your organization but supports our overall community mass dispensing efforts. The remaining information in this workbook focuses on assisting planners with understanding the dispensing process and developing **Worksite POD** plans.

A recent report developed by Rand Corporation, **Recommended Infrastructure Standards for Mass Antibiotic Dispensing** addresses minimal functions that should be incorporated into mass dispensing operations during emergency operations where time is of the essence. These minimal functions include:

- **Directing** clients through the POD
- **Deciding** which medication to dispense
- **Dispensing** the medication
- **Disseminating** information about the medication

The majority of the tasks involved in establishing a **Worksite POD** support one of these four functions.

- a) Directing – how to get employees to and through the POD.
 - 1) Prior to directing employees through the POD, there are numerous pre-event planning activities to accomplish. It is important to remember that given the aerosolized release of anthrax scenario, time is the worst enemy and the medication must get into the population as soon as possible. Informing your employees that your organization has established a partnership with public health and will operate a **Worksite POD** during an emergency, and soliciting volunteers to assist with operating the facility is one of those key initial activities.



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- 2) Defining your dispensing population - Determining how many people comprise your organization's dispensing population sets the stage for many other planning tasks for your **Worksite POD**, such as facility size and design; the number of staff needed to operate the facility and the amount of medication received from public health. When determining the appropriate number, in addition to employees are there others who are critical to operations that should be considered? During any emergency, public health officials realize that people are most concerned with the health, safety and protection of their loved ones. Family members will form the support structure that allows your employees to continue normal operations to the extent necessary or allowable as the community endures and recovers from a public health emergency. For this reason, we recommend that you plan to provide medications to your employee's families as well. This is referred to as the "Head of Household" model, meaning your employees will be able to obtain enough medication from your **Worksite POD** for themselves and their designated family members, as long as they are accounted for on the necessary forms - Patient Information Forms.
- 3) **POD throughput** - Directing also requires you to determine your **Worksite POD** throughput which is based on your designated population, the number of dispensing staff available, your dispensing flow and the time available to dispense medication. Keep in mind that operations at your **Worksite POD** fit into the larger scheme of a Metro Public Health mass dispensing campaign; therefore, it is extremely important that your organization establish a throughput that supports the time available to dispense.
 - b) **Deciding** - determining which medication is appropriate to dispense.
 - 1) **Patient Information** - Prior to receiving medication at a **POD**, regardless of whether it is a open (public) or **Worksite POD**, federal and state laws require certain information for each person receiving medication be completed and provided at the **POD**. Given the time constraints in the aerosolized release of anthrax scenario, the medical community understands that time is of the essence and applicable emergency powers afforded to the Governor, related to mass dispensing, will most likely be enacted. Metro Public Health has developed medical screening forms that support the minimal data that needs to be collected during this type of emergency. These forms must be completed by employees and turned in at the **POD** prior to receiving medication. A major advantage of being a

Partnering With Public Health

Worksite POD is that Metro Public Health can make these forms available pre-event to help improve throughput goals.

- 2) Which medication is appropriate? Medical screening is the term that describes the process of determining which medications are appropriate for each individual given their current medical status based on the information provided on the medical screening form. In traditional scenarios, medical screening is conducted by licensed healthcare professionals who will assess the medical screening form and any available medical history to determine the best medication. In the anthrax scenario, again, time is of the essence. The decision of which medication to provide will mostly be based on written and approved protocols which will allow decisions to be made by those without formal medical training. Your public health liaison from Metro Public Health will provide the necessary algorithms, guidance and training to your **Worksite POD** staff involved in the screening process to determine which medication should be dispensed at your facility.
- c) Dispensing – the actual process of handing the medication over to the client.
 - 1) Head of Household Policy – It is recommended that your employees pick up medications for those immediate family members that they are responsible for in their own home. They must have the necessary information completed on the head of household form to receive medications for their family members.
 - d) Disseminating – providing the necessary information/education forms and follow-up information.
 - 1) Drug Information and Instructions – The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires each person who receives medication at your **Worksite POD** also receive information about the medication they are taking, dosage instructions and who to call or what to do if they experience adverse reactions to the medication. This information will be provided to you upon receipt of medication.
 - 2) Other Important Information – It is important to provide accurate and complete information to employees. Let your employees know why and how the **Worksite POD** would be established, and how the medication dispensing process will work. This will provide your employees with confidence in the overall approach, and is an opportunity to present accurate and reassuring information before and during the emergency. In addition to information about the medication, the following topics should be addressed in the information/education process:

Partnering With Public Health

- Possible threatening agents - In a public health emergency it is very important that people are informed of the true nature of the threat. They need to know the answers to questions like:
 - How do I know if I've been exposed?
 - What are the symptoms?
 - Is the disease contagious? If so, what do I need to do to protect myself and my family?
 - What are the long-term implications?

Your public health liaison will explain how this information will also be part of the Metro Public Health public information campaign. They will also provide fact sheets about anthrax to disseminate.

Preparing Your Business for Public Health Emergencies

V. Developing a Worksite POD Plan

Now that you have a common understanding of point of dispensing operations, it is time to develop your **Worksite POD** plan. Your organization is most likely already engaged in continuity planning to ensure it is prepared for disruptive events. It is likely you will have to activate various aspects of your continuity plan when you establish your **Worksite POD**. The following information will provide key planning considerations to develop actionable items to help you with this process.

- a) **Protect Your Assets** – Prepare your employees – Identify employees within your organization who will assist with the planning and preparation process and involve them early.



- 1) **Appoint a planning committee** – Consider including human resource personnel, continuity managers, medical advisors, logistics specialists, and security staff. Your local Public Health liaison will provide guidance to the committee as needed.
- 2) **Determine your dispensing population** - Decide whether you will accommodate employee’s families in your preparedness effort, and identify beforehand how you will define household, dependents or family. Then determine how many total employees and family members will be served so that you’ll be able to estimate the amount of medication needed at the time of a public health emergency.

- b) **Organize Your Staff** -

- 1) **Determine Organizational Structure** – The government uses the Incident Command System (ICS) to organize and manage its all-hazards response operations. ICS has also been adapted by many private sector organizations. ICS divides an emergency response into five manageable general staff functions which will all play an important role in your **Worksite POD** operations -

Preparing Your Business for Public Health Emergencies

- Command
- Operations
- Planning
- Logistics
- Finance/Administration

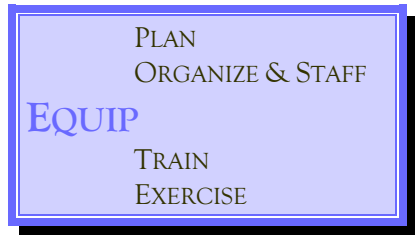


The command staff functions of safety, public information and liaison may also be incorporated in the structure.

- 2) Determine Staffing Needs – as you develop your staffing plan for the **Worksite POD** based on your organizational structure, consider the following:
 - a. Determine security needs and capabilities - Consider your current security resources and capabilities to determine if additional security will be needed in an emergency to protect your facility and staff. Employees attending the **Worksite POD** will need to feel safe to do so.
 - b. **Worksite POD** Operations Staff – The number of staff volunteers needed to staff your **Worksite POD** will be determined by a variety of factors such as the size of your dispensing population, your desired throughput and the design of your **Worksite POD** floor plan. As a **Worksite POD** you have the advantage of coordinating some functions prior to an emergency. For example, if you disseminate the patient information forms on line for employees to download and complete prior to arriving at the **Worksite POD**, you will reduce the need to have as many staff to cover registration. If you provide an intense education campaign about your involvement with public health and ensure employees understand that if they are sick, they should report to a hospital or treatment facility and not come to the **Worksite POD**, you will decrease the number of staff needed to conduct the triage function.
 - c. Recruiting Staff – Mass dispensing operations rely heavily on volunteers. It is important that you solicit volunteers within your organization to help staff your **Worksite POD**. Metro Public Health will look to your organization to meet the necessary staffing requirements to support your throughput goals.
- c) Prepare Your Facility - Preparing your facility ahead of time is essential.

Preparing Your Business for Public Health Emergencies

- 1) Identify a dispensing location - In order to dispense medications to a large number of people in a relatively short time, you may need to identify ahead of time a particular location (primary and alternate are recommended) that is capable of certain accommodations. This area should be fairly large and open, preferably a large meeting room or cafeteria. Some key factors to consider include:



- Separate entrance and exit
- Easily identifiable by all employees
- Place to secure medications and supplies
- Accommodations for people with disabilities
- Accommodation of tables, chairs and large numbers of people
- Moving people through the POD in only one direction to avoid confusion and crossovers

- 2) Identify/purchase/store necessary supplies

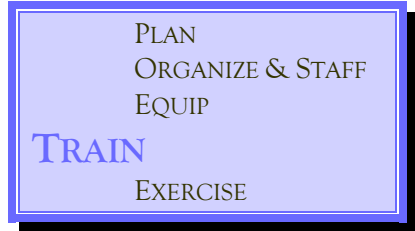
- d) Develop Your Procedures - The planning committee should develop procedures directly related to **Worksite POD** operations, in collaboration with Metro Public Health.

- 1) Determine procedures specifically related to the activation, set-up, operation and deactivation of the dispensing site.
- 2) Determine how medications will be received - Organizations will pick up medications at a predetermined location. Identify individuals authorized to accept and sign for medications and supplies and provide that information to Metro Public Health. Security personnel should be on-hand at all times when the medications are on the premises. Plan for material handling equipment to assist with downloading and moving medication into your facility if needed.
- 3) It is possible that there will be some medications left over after all of your employees have attended the **Worksite POD**. Procedures should be developed to account for how medication will be returned to your local public health agency.
- 4) Include procedures for handling small/typical emergencies that could potentially happen during the dispensing process. Consider and plan for:

Preparing Your Business for Public Health Emergencies

- Minor medical emergencies - Call 9-1-1? Handle on-site?
- Security breach - Call police? Handle on-site?

e) Provide education/information/training - Provide employees with as much information about dispensing site operations as possible. Much of this can be done pre-event. A well trained staff will become essential to ensure your designated population receives medication in a timely manner; thereby, promoting continuity of operations for your organization and meeting public health's dispensing time goal.



1) Several education and training resources are currently available for POD operations. These include free online training at:

- FEMA's Emergency Management Institute <http://training.fema.gov/IS/>
IS-100.a: Introduction to the Incident Command System I-100
IS-200: ICS for Single Resource and Initial Action Incidents
IS-700: National Incident Management System (NIMS), an Introduction

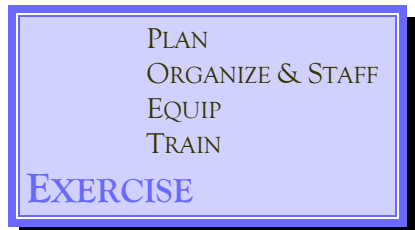
- University of Albany School of Public Health

Mass Dispensing: A Primer for Community Leaders Working in a Point of Dispensing (POD)

<http://www.ualbanycphp.org/learning/default.cfm>

- CDC's Mass Antibiotic Dispensing Series - **Taking Care of Business** -
<http://www2.cdc.gov/PHTN/webcast/business/index.asp>

f) Exercise Your Plan - Exercising plans helps to identify any problems that can be rectified before an emergency occurs. Consider conducting such exercises jointly with your local public health agency to further strengthen your collaboration. We recommend conducting annual internal training for your **Worksite POD** staff, specifically addressing the following three key areas:



- 1) POD activation
- 2) Medication receipt and dispensing procedures

Preparing Your Business for Public Health Emergencies

3) POD staff roles/responsibilities

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of a Worksite POD?	To provide life saving medications to a designated population of people and their family members during a public health emergency.
What are the requirements for becoming a Worksite POD?	In Davidson County, organizations with 500 employees or more and occupational health staff onsite are eligible to become Worksite PODs .
How much is it going to cost?	Medications and training are free of charge.
Will there be training provided?	Yes.
When would we be asked to dispense medications at their own facility?	The only time the health department would ask organizations to dispense medications to employees and their families would be if there is a great risk to the entire population and preventive medications need to be taken immediately.
Who operates the Worksite POD?	Employees within your organization will operate the Worksite POD .
Will people be allowed to pick up medications for their families?	Yes, employees will be allowed to pick up medications for their families if your organization decides to do this.
How will medication be packaged?	The medication will be packaged for individual use and will be taken orally. Appropriate dosage instructions will accompany each bottle of medication.
Who needs to take the medication?	Under this type of emergency, the entire population within a community will need to take the medication as long as they meet certain criteria. This includes adults and children. Appropriate dosage instructions will accompany each bottle of medication that is dispensed at the Worksite POD .

Frequently Asked Questions

What about pets?

The medications provided at the **Worksite POD** are for humans only. Employees with pets should contact their veterinarians for more information about the risk to their pet and any preventive measures they can take to help protect the health of their pet.

What about employees who telework or commute long distances to and from work?

As a **Worksite POD**, expect to provide medications to all employees and their families, realizing that long distance commuters may choose to go to an open POD closer to their home.

Is it possible that our organization will need to operate a Worksite POD after-hours, during the weekend, or on a holiday?

Public health emergencies can occur at any time. It is essential that your organization be prepared to operate a **Worksite POD** during non-working hours since your employees health will be at risk if medications are delayed.

Is this legal? What if someone gets hurt or has a reaction to the medicine?

Yes it is legal. Public health officials depend on volunteers to assist during public health emergencies. Participating as a **Worksite POD** is a voluntary program and there are various laws and statutes applicable to liability protection.

Conclusion

Metro Public Health would like to thank you for taking the time to review this workbook to help you develop your **Worksite POD** plan.

By developing long-lasting relationships with the private sector, government agencies will be more adept and prepared to respond to a potential public health emergency. We appreciate your cooperation.

Resource & Reference Guide

Local Public Health Authorities and Resources

- Metro Public Health Department
<http://health.nashville.gov/>
- Mayor's Office of Emergency Management
<http://www.nashville.gov/oem/>

State Resources

- Tennessee Department of Health
<http://health.state.tn.us/>
- Tennessee Emergency Management Agency
<http://www.tnema.org/>

Other Resources

- Rand Corporation
http://www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/TR553/
- Centers For Disease Control and Prevention Emergency Preparedness & Response
www.bt.cdc.gov
- Federal Emergency Management Agency Independent Study Courses
www.training.fema.gov/IS/crslst.asp
- National Response Guidelines (September 2007)
http://www.dhs.gov/xprepresp/publications/gc_1189788256647.shtm
- National Response Framework Resource Center
<http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nrf/>
- Department of Health and Human Services
Disasters and Emergency Business
<http://www.hhs.gov/disasters/discussion/business/index.html>

Resource & Reference Guide

- Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act

<http://www.hhs.gov/disasters/discussion/planners/prepact/index.html>

- Ready.GOV - Ready Business

<http://www.ready.gov/business/index.html>

Resource & Reference Guide

Liability Protection – Liability protection afforded to those involved in dispensing medical countermeasures in association with emergency preparedness and response continues to be a topic of interest at all levels of government. This is also a key concern to potential **Worksite POD** organizations. We encourage planners to research the protections provided under the **Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act) (Pub. L. 109-148)**. This act provides guidance on liability protection for claims arising from administration and use of covered countermeasures to manufacturers, distributors, program planners and qualified persons involved in the administration and use of a covered countermeasure, as specified in a declaration by the Secretary of HHS [See *section 319F-3 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. §247d-6d)*]. The exception to this protection is willful misconduct acts committed by the covered persons. We recommend planners seek appropriate legal guidance within your jurisdiction and familiarize yourself with legislation that may be applicable to **Worksite POD** operations and include this information in your recruiting and operational materials.