

Preparedness Plan

June 2023

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Date of Change	Changed by	Description of Changes
6/30/2018	Heather Fortner, RHC	Entire manual, first edition
		1.0; 1.2; 2.0; 2.2; 2.3; 2.4.1.; 2.4.2; 3.1; 3.2; 3.3;
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		Replaced RHC terminology with Executive
6/10/2021	Heather Fortner, Executive Director	Director throughout document; 2.6.1; 4.3.1; 6.0; Appendices C, D, E, and G
0/10/2021	Executive Director	Replaced Executive Council terminology with
		Executive Board; Added/updated MOU
		information on page 8; Removed St. Jude
6/28/2021	Heather Fortner, Executive Director	Children's Research Hospital from the listing of Board members on page 8
0/20/2021	Executive Director	Board memoers on page 8
	Heather Fortner,	
6/6/2022	Executive Director	2.2; 2.6.1; 2.7; 3.1.1; 4.1; 4.3.1; 4.3.2; 6.0
		1.2; 2.2; 2.3; remove 2.5; 2.6 becomes 2.5 – edit
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6/5/2023	Executive Director	6.0; updates to Appendices as appropriate

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1.0 Introduction

The Mid-South Emergency Planning Coalition (MSEPC) is a forum for the health care community to interact with one another and with other response agencies and community partners at a county, regional, and state level. MSEPC activities are based on the capabilities identified by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR). The MSEPC coordinates trainings to assist health care responders in developing the necessary skills and improves health care response through coordinated exercise and evaluation.

1.1 Purpose of the Plan

The Mid-South Emergency Planning Coalition Preparedness Plan is an operational resource tool for health care response partners to reference in disaster planning, response, and recovery efforts. It provides resources for emergency preparedness and guidance for integrating the emergency medical response with other incident management partners. This plan explains how the health care coalition (HCC) works collectively to prioritize and test operational capabilities that promote communication, information sharing, resource coordination, operational response, and recovery.

1.2 Scope

This plan was developed to support the operational activities of the MSEPC, and nothing contained herein is intended to supersede local, state, or federal requirements or authorities. This Preparedness Plan is consistent with Emergency Support Function 8 (ESF-8), and other applicable standards, including the Tennessee Emergency Management Plan (TEMP).

This plan describers the role and functions of critical response partners (hospitals, regional health jurisdictions, emergency medical services, emergency management, etc) under ESF-8 of the TEMP. The plan and its appendices address general coalition governance and authorities, planning and purchasing processes, operational concepts, inter-agency communication, resource sharing and allocation, patient tracking, the Healthcare Resource Tracking System (HRTS), ReadyOp, and training and exercise components.

This plan does not supersede any local or internal emergency response plans. Rather, it is intended to augment and support plans across agencies and disciplines to support the coordinated emergency response of ESF-8 in the event of a mass casualty event.

This plan is not intended to circumvent or supersede existing lines of emergency communications between hospitals and local emergency agencies. Local and county Emergency Management and/or Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) remain the first line of contact for the coordination and acquisition of emergency resources.

The purpose of the Coalition is planning and preparedness, not response. However, the collaborative planning developed through the Coalition is invaluable for a well-coordinated response among health care

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partners, each member of the HCC has its own plans, and members respond to emergencies in accordance with their organizations' plans. Conversely, each organization's plans take into consideration the existing local, state, and federal structures and how they can obtain or provide resources by working within those structures. Therefore, coordinated planning is essential to meeting the Coalition's goals.

This plan is supported by other plans and documents including: The National Disaster Management Systems (NDMS) Plan (Appendix A); the Shelby County Health Department (SCHD) All Hazards Emergency Operations Plan (BEOP) (Appendix B); and the MSEPC Coalition Bylaws (Appendix C).

1.3 Administrative Support

This plan has been initially approved by Executive Board members and shared with all Active HCC members for their review and input prior to its final adoption. It will then be reviewed by all Active Coalition members annually, at minimum, or at such time a gap is identified that should be immediately addressed following a real-world event or exercise.

During each routine annual review, attention will be paid to identifying gaps and developing strategies to address these issues, planning for exercises to evaluate the effectiveness of corrective actions, and considering the need for further revision of this plan based on findings.

This plan will be maintained by the MSPEC and share with various Coalition partners including EMS, emergency management, and others as necessary. The Executive Director of the MSEPC will provide direct administrative support to the document.

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2.0 Coalition Overview

The MSEPC is a multi-agency coordinating group that assists the health care community and other emergency response agencies to jointly prepare for, respond to, and recover from disaster events and public health emergencies. The MSEPC serves as a cooperative alliance of health, response, and other governmental agencies, along with other community partners in the region through collaborative planning and information sharing among a broad range of health care partners to protect, promote, and improve the health and prosperity of people in the Mid-South and across the state.

2.1 Purpose

Using and all-hazards approach, the HCC promotes and coordinates preparedness and mitigation efforts of the Coalition's member organizations. This support is based on the capabilities identified by ASPR, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the Tennessee Department of Health (TDH), and other regulatory agencies by:

- Using ASPR's Performance Measures as a guide to strengthen the community's medical resiliency, surge capacity, and capabilities.
- Providing a forum for health care providers and community partners to interact with one another at county, regional, and state levels to build relationships and partnerships.
- Coordinating training to assist Coalition members in developing the necessary skills to prepare for and respond to disasters that may affect the health care system.
- Improving response capabilities through coordinated exercises and evaluations following the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) doctrine.
- Serving as a vehicle to prioritize the use of federal grant funds for planning, equipping, training, and exercising for the improvement of the health care community's preparedness, response, and recovery efforts.
- Providing technical assistance to individual member organizations with the development of their emergency plans.

2.2 Coalition Boundaries

The MSEPC's geographical area encompasses the following counties: Fayette, Lauderdale, Shelby, and Tipton Counties in Tennessee; DeSoto County in Mississippi; and Crittenden County in Arkansas.

US Census Bureau 2022 Population Estimates for Covered Counties¹

Tennessee	2021 Population Estimate	Mississippi	2021 Population Estimate	Arkansas	2021 Population Estimate
Fayette	43,630	DeSoto	191,723	Crittenden	47,061
Lauderdale	24,793				
Shelby	916,371				
Tipton	61,656				
Region Total	1,285,234				

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The MSEPC participates in an active network of healthcare coalitions across Tennessee as well, through the Executive Director and Regional Medical Communications Center (RMCC), which permits planning, response, and recovery activities to also occur outside of our geographical boundaries.

2.3 Coalition Membership

Coalition Membership is open to all healthcare organizations, jurisdictions, and emergency management-related organizations within the Coalition's geographic area as outlined in the MSEPC Bylaws.

Memphis is divided into four types: Active Coalition Members, Inactive Coalition Members, Advisory Body, and Invited Non-members, or Subject Matter Experts. Active members maintain Coalition participation by attending at least 9 of every 12 (75%) meetings annually. Inactive members are those participating organizations who have not maintained meeting attendance.

Coalition membership includes a diverse representation of facilities and organizations including:

- Hospitals
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- Emergency management organizations
- Public health agencies

- Long term care facilities
- Hospice and home health providers
- Dialysis centers
- Surgery centers

A roster of member organizations will be maintained and updated each quarter. The roster will be published annually. The roster may include, but does not necessarily require inclusion of, representative names. The most current roster is included as Appendix D.

The Advisory Body is comprised solely of Executive Board members. Executive Board will be composed of the Executive Director, and one representative from the following: Baptist Memorial Health Care Corporation, Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare, Regional One Health, Tenet Healthcare, Lauderdale Community Hospital, Memphis VA Medical Center, EMS, Emergency Management, Public Health, and a representative from the Non-Hospital Subcommittee. They are tasked with maintaining an advisory role to the Coalition and ensuring day-to-day Coalition operations and requirements are met.

The Coalition reserves the right to invite subject matter experts to attend as needed. Additionally, visitors often attend and are encouraged to participate in Coalition discussions.

Additional membership details can be found in the MSEPC Bylaws.

2.4 Organizational Structure and Governance

To meet all required Healthcare Preparedness Program Capabilities and Deliverables, the MSEPC must maintain an internal structure to support Coalition activities and operations. Specific roles and responsibilities by membership type are described in the MSEPC Bylaws to include member guidelines for participation and engagement as well as policies and procedures for making changes and delegation of authority.

Participating organization executives formally endorse their organizations' participation in the MSEPC through signing our MSEPC Memorandum of Understanding (Appendix G). Beginning in 2023, MOU's will be required

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every 3 years. Executives are encouraged to participate in MSEPC meeting or send feedback through their organizational representative.

2.4.1 Role of Executive Director

The Executive Director provides all administrative support to the Coalition and is responsible for carrying out the Coalition's daily business. This is done mainly by:

- Providing consultative and information input into key decisions and ensuring integrated planning, similar to that of a multi-agency coordinating group.
- Facilitating and assisting in the development of processes for hospital and Coalition training, plans, and exercises.
- Developing processes and plans for the care of at-risk populations involved in disaster situations.
- Coordinating training, exercises, and evaluation at the local, regional, and divisional levels.
- Assembling, finalizing, and submitting all administrative documentation as required to appropriate
 agencies per funding requirements.
- Providing technical support to web-based programs (HRTS, HC Standard) for all Coalition members.
- Establishing and maintaining TNHAN profiles and groups for Coalition members for notification purposes.
- Maintaining a working knowledge of regulations and federal guidelines and the ability to apply regulations in various settings.
- Maintaining a working knowledge of response equipment and systems.
- Submitting all Coalition approved expenditures for payment.

2.4.2 Role of Executive Board

The Executive Board is responsible for:

- Providing consultative and informed input into key decisions and ensuring integrated planning similar to that of a multi-agency coordinating group.
- Serving as workgroup facilitators during Coalition planning sessions and activities.
- Assisting in the coordination of exercise and evaluation training at the local, regional, and divisional levels.
- Reviewing and approving funding requests from Coalition members.
- Serving as a liaison between private, local, regional, state, and federal partners.

2.5 Meetings

2.5.1 Date and Location

MSEPC meetings are held quarterly on the third Thursday of each month at 1:00 p.m. The meeting location will be confirmed via email when the agenda is shared.

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2.5.2 Meeting Procedures

The Executive Director will develop, utilizing Coalition member input, the meeting agenda and ensure it is provided to Coalition members at least five business days before the meeting. The agenda will be sent to the Coalition membership via email. Meetings will be led by the Executive Director, or designated Executive Board member, while all MSEPC decisions will be made by the Executive Board, serving as the Advisory Body.

2.6 Committee Structure

Subcommittees or workgroups may be established by the Executive Board to address specific needs of the organizations.

3.0 Strategic and Operational Planning

3.1 Risk, Gap Analysis, and Budget Development

The MSEPC region faces a wide range of hazards. Each Coalition hospital member conducts a Hazard Vulnerability Assessment (HVA) on an annual basis using a template provided to evaluate their risk exposure. The results from each facility HVA is then combined into an MSEPC HVA (Appendix F). Active Members review the cumulative results and make recommendation on rankings. Based on input provided, the final HVA is developed. Executive Board members vote to approve the final Coalition HVA each year.

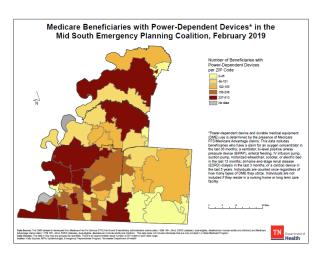
Finally, the Executive Board utilizes the Gap Analysis to develop budget categories and priorities. The budget will be developed to include the total of MSEPC funding. Additionally, a strategic plan will be developed to include projects that cannot be initially funded but should be considered in the event surplus funding becomes available or for future grant years.

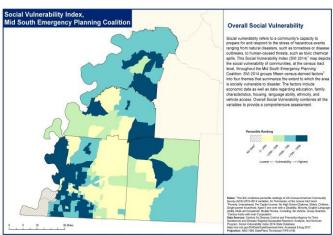
This process will cycle annually to meet established grant requirements for budget completion.

3.2 Whole Community Planning

The Coalition regularly receives and reviews data from the HHS emPOWER database as well as CDC's Social Vulnerability Index. This data, combined with common best practices, work to ensure that plans are inclusive and support the needs of the whole community. Coalition members are encouraged to utilize this data in the Emergency Operation Plan. Coalition members should consider unique needs when developing their plans. These may include the needs of: children, pregnant women, seniors, individuals with access and functional needs, individuals with disabilities, and those with behavioral health conditions.

Example of empower and SVI Reports





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The Executive Director will ensure that this data is reviewed, bi-annually and annually respectively, with MSEPC members to ensure adequate planning considerations are made for those with access and functional needs. The information is also made easily accessible on the Coalition's website (www.midsouthepc.org).

3.3 Exercise Planning and Design Process

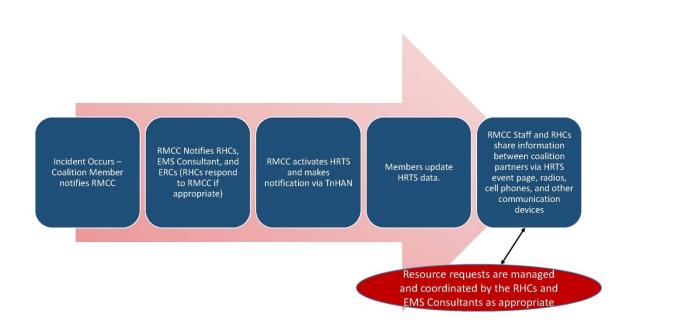
MSEPC maintains a robust exercise program. An annual full-scale mass surge exercise is conducted to test Coalition capabilities according to those outlined in the Mid-South Surge Plan. Community based tabletop and functional exercises are also planned as necessary to assist MSEPC membership in the completion of required exercises for accreditation.

The Executive Board meets to discuss and prioritize training and exercise categories based on feedback from the HVA and budget development process. Trainings and exercises are then planned around identified needs to further test capabilities and newly improved processes.

The Executive Director secures training opportunities, provides logistical support, and ensures training advertisement through the MSEPC website, calendar, and/or distribution lists. The Executive Director also works closely with local volunteer agencies and Coalition member organizations to recruit volunteers for exercises to increase the realistic simulations for triage and transport.

3.4 Incident Management

The MSEPC is not an independent response body. Rather, each member of the Coalition has a primary organization in which they are accountable and they respond to emergencies according to their organization's plan. Nevertheless, MSEPC's combined response efforts resembles a multi-agency coordination system dedicated to meeting ESF-8 related needs such as medical surge events. The following diagram demonstrates the basic coordination-related functions of the MSEPC members.



During incidents, information shall be shared as freely as possible given the situation. Resources should also be shared as needed. Every effort should be made by the borrowing organization to assure that shared and/or borrowed resources are returned to their owner organization in the same working order in which they are provided.

3.5 Communications and Information Sharing

The state of Tennessee provides two information technology solutions to assist the MSEPC to communicate, share information, and maintain situational awareness: the Healthcare Resource Tracking System (HRTS) and ReadyOp.

HRTS is used by acute care hospitals, stand-alone emergency rooms, EMS, and RMCC to track and visualize the availability of beds and services within facilities across the region and state. This allows more rapid evaluation of service availability and delivery to patients. It also allows facilities to advise others in the region of situations and impacts at their facility and provides a message board capability allowing users to communicate and share information about an event.

ReadyOp is used for both patient tracking system and mass notifications. As a patient tracking system, ReadyOp allows EMS and hospitals to document patient movement and maintain accountability from field triage to hospital. The system is useful during large events or mass casualty incidents and can be helpful with reunification efforts during incidents.

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As a mass notification tool, ReadyOp, allows important messages to be distributed to contacts across a wide range of communication devices. The system is an important way to rapidly notify Coalition members of issues impacting the region and provides for timely distribution of information for situational awareness purposes.

Generally, the primary method of communicating alerts to hospitals and other key entities will be accomplished through HRTS and ReadyOp. Additional means of communication may be used depending on the nature of the incident. These may include email, cell phone, land line, HAM, VHF, UHF, satellite radio, WINLINK, and 700/800 MHz radio systems.

3.6 Resource Coordination

Each Coalition member organization is responsible for developing and maintaining their own emergency operations plans. However, members are encouraged to collaborate with other members to share best practices, lessons learned, and experiences while developing or updating plans.

The HCC maintains an inventory of Coalition-purchased resources that can be deployed between sites during a time of need. The Coalition also provides this information to TDH and neighboring HCCs for inclusion in their resource management and tracking system to allow for better tracking and deployment of resources from coalitions statewide.

As previously mentioned, members of the HCC are signatory to a region-wide MOU which indicates their readiness and willingness to support information sharing, collaboration, and emergency resource needs of other members in the Coalition.

The RMCC for the MSEPC is located at Regional One Health (ROH) in Memphis. ROH and the RMCC are Coalition partners and are heavily involved in planning and daily operations with TDH and SCHD. The RMCC handles EMS traffic daily, and there is no transition from these operations to the RMCC function, as may occur in other areas of the state.

During a disaster of regional or statewide proportion, the respective Emergency Medical Services Regional Consultant (EMS-RC) and the Executive Director will work with the RMCC to coordinate patient transport to appropriate facilities. They may also assist with the movement of assets and resources to areas where they are needed. If necessary, they will communicate with other RMCC's throughout the state to fulfill this mission.

The Coalition's region also maintains caches as part of the CDC's Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) and CHEMPACK program. These resources are forward deployed at strategic locations throughout the region to allow for rapid deployment to field incidents and hospitals.

3.7 Program Maintenance and Improvement

MSEPC members wish to ensure open communication and continuous improvement for Coalition activities. Member feedback to the Executive Board is encouraged. Feedback can be provided directly or anonymously.

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The Executive Board shall attempt to address concerns at the lowest level possible. If they are unable to rectify the issue, identified concerns may be brought to the Coalition membership as appropriate for resolution.

The Coalition uses a range of means to gauge member participation and engagement as well as maintain accountability. Sign in sheets for meetings or trainings are collected to document member attendance. Meeting minutes are recorded to further document agenda items and member feedback during discussion. Most Coalition communication and outreach is conducted via email allowing the Coalition to maintain more thorough records of feedback, compliance, and member engagement.

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4.0 Coalition Sustainability

Under the leadership of the Executive Board, the Coalition regularly evaluates priorities and needs across the Coalition. Both the Coalition and its members have specific and unique needs as it relates to emergency preparedness. The Coalition's priorities and objectives are designed to support readiness across the region. Individual members' objectives and activities should be focused on preparing their facility to support themselves and the region as needed.

4.1 Maintenance and Stability

MSEPC strives to promote the value of healthcare and medical readiness with support from its member organizations. Inter-organizational relationships and trust are the hallmarks of the MSEPC, ensuring a robust and sustainable Coalition. Coalition member organizations recognize that – even though they may be competitors – they are better when working together to prepare for and respond to medical disasters. While grant funding is an asset in helping MSEPC to meet its goals, the Coalition members first understand the importance of the strategic partnerships developed through the Coalition.

Furthermore, TDH's acknowledgement of and provision for a full-time staff member for each HCC who is available to provide program expertise, guidance, and administrative support to the Coalition is recognized as key to maintaining and improving the MSEPC. Without the full-time contribution of the Executive Director, the daily operations of the MSEPC would suffer.

4.2 Engagement of Partners and Stakeholders

Executives (clinical and non-clinical) are encouraged to participate in MSEPC meetings and/or send feedback through their MSEPC organizational representative. Furthermore, most participating organizations incorporate MSEPC activities into their internal emergency preparedness/response meetings and structure, which includes executive input and oversight.

MSEPC partners with multiple other organizations and committees, whose missions are to integrate and coordinate the access and functional needs of children and adults in emergency preparedness, response, and recovery before, during, and after a disaster with a collaborative whole community network.

4.3 Objectives

As part of its strategic planning process, the Coalition identified a series of priorities and objectives to guide it moving forward. The objectives are grouped into three priorities:

- Organization
- Planning
- Training/Exercising

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4.3.1 Short-Term Objectives

Organization

- Redesign MSEPC website to create a more user-friendly and informative experience
- o Explore social media options to increase public awareness and visibility of MSEPC mission.

Planning

- Develop a Chemical Response Annex to the Coalition Response Plan.
- o Implement improved inventory records to track all MSEPC purchases items.
- Continue to work with local and regional medical, clinical, and volunteer programs to recruit clinical staff and other partners to serve on a deployable team for the expanding Alternate Care Unit (also known as the "Mobile Field Medical Tent").

Training

o Provide HICS training for all Coalition members.

4.3.2 Long-Term Objectives

• Organization

- o Develop consultation options to offer to MSEPC membership organizations.
- o Develop training and exercises work group among current members.

Planning

- o Consolidate MSEPC plans into a single document to conclude all annexes.
- Create and maintain partnerships to further the use and potential profitability of the Mobile Field Medical Tent.

Training

- Establish minimum training requirements for Coalition members to establish a core competency among members.
- o Increase incorporation of vulnerable populations into full scale, tabletop, and functional exercises sponsored by the Coalition.

4.3.3 Recurring Objectives

Organization

- Enhance collaboration and relationships with state and local emergency management agencies through mutually beneficial events, conferences, and trainings.
- Seek opportunities to recruit and serve a wide range of disciplines.
- o Explore additional funding opportunities through grants and projects.

Planning

- o Annually review and update all Coalition Plans.
- Annually review Coalition priorities and focus.
- Annually evaluate the status of the HPP grant to anticipate funding potentials for planning purposes.

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- Utilize After Action Reports (AARs) from exercises and actual events to inform planning, training, and resource decisions.
- Engage in large event planning opportunities and leverage these events for learning and training opportunities.
- Regularly evaluate communications systems and capabilities and determine any training, equipment, or operation issues needed remedy.

Training

- o Evaluate training needs and provide opportunities based on AARs and member feedback.
- Conduct an annual full-scale exercise to test Coalition member organizations' plans and meet grant requirements.
- o Conduct regular redundant communication exercises.

4.4 Member Objectives and Activities

- Create and maintain emergency plans using lessons learned from exercises and real incidents.
- Regularly engage in, participate in, and contribute to Coalition meetings and activities.
- Participate in exercises including full scale community based exercises, tabletop exercises, and communication drills.
- Annually conduct a Hazard Vulnerability Analysis for their facility and contribute to the Coalition's annually HVA survey process.
- Participate in the Coalition's process to review and update plans.

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5.0 Acronyms

AAR – After Action Report

ASPR - Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response

BEOP – Basic Emergency Operations Plan

CDC - Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

CHEC - Certified Hospital Emergency Coordinator

CMS - Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

COOP – Continuity of Operations Plan

EMS – Emergency Medical Services

EMS-RC – Emergency Medical Services – Regional Consultant

EOC – Emergency Operations Center

ESF-8 - Emergency Support Function 8

FOA – Funding Opportunity Announcement

HCC - Health Care Coalition

HHS - Health and Human Services

HPP - Hospital Preparedness Program

HRTS - Healthcare Resource Tracking System

HSEEP - Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program

HVA - Hazard Vulnerability Assessment

MOU - Memorandum of Understanding

MRC - Medical Reserve Corps

MSEPC - Mid-South Emergency Planning Coalition

NDMS - National Disaster Medical System

RMCC – Regional Medical Communication Center

ROH - Regional One Health

SCHD – Shelby County Health Department

SNS – Strategic National Stockpile

TDH – Tennessee Department of Health

TEMP – Tennessee Emergency Management Plan

THERF – Tennessee Hospital Education & Research Foundation

TNHAN - Tennessee Health Alert Network

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6.0 Appendices

All appendices below can be found online at http://www.midsouthepc.org/members-only/plans/ and accessible to Members anytime. Non-members can request any plan below in writing.

Appendix A – National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) Plan

Appendix B – 2022 SCHD All Hazards Emergency Operations Plan

Appendix C – MSEPC Bylaws

Appendix D – Full MSEPC Roster

Appendix E – Capabilities Request Form

Appendix F – FY23 Composite HVA Charts

Appendix G - MOU Sample

¹"Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Counties: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2022." United States Census Bureau. March 2023. Accessed June 5, 2023. https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/popest/2020s-counties-total.html