

# NAHERC Frequently Asked Questions

## **What is the National Animal Health Emergency Response Corps (NAHERC)?**

NAHERC is a group of veterinarians, veterinary technicians and veterinary students willing to volunteer and deploy as temporary federal employees in response to animal health emergencies.

## **What does NAHERC do?**

NAHERC provides support for animal disease incidents that affect livestock and poultry, and provides support for all-hazard animal health emergency responses in the event local capabilities are overwhelmed.

## **What is the history of NAHERC?**

NAHERC started in 2001, when a foot and mouth disease (FMD) outbreak in the United Kingdom identified the need for veterinary professionals for animal disease outbreaks. One hundred and forty five NAHERC responders from the United States participated in the United Kingdom FMD response.

In 2002, 71 NAHERC responders participated in the Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza task force. In 2003, 340 NAHERC responders participated in the Exotic Newcastle Disease task force. In 2010, 1 responder assisted with TB testing in Oregon.

## **Who sponsors NAHERC?**

NAHERC is administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Veterinary Services (VS).

## **Who is eligible to join NAHERC?**

Veterinarians, Animal Health Technicians, and veterinary students are eligible to join NAHERC. You must be a United States citizen and meet the educational and other application requirements. Over 3800 NAHERC members have successfully applied since 2007.

## **How do I join NAHERC?**

Join by applying through the USAJOBS website (<http://www.usajobs.gov/>). In the search box type the word "NAHERC". This will bring up both the Veterinary Medical Officer (VMO) and Animal Health Technician (AHT) job announcements. For further information concerning the NAHERC program send an email to [NAHERC@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:NAHERC@aphis.usda.gov).

## **Do NAHERC members get paid?**

When activated, NAHERC members become temporary federal employees and are compensated. Authorized travel expenses and authorized overtime are also paid while on assignment.

## **NAHERC positions are listed as "Full Time Temporary not to exceed one year." Can deployments be up to one year?**

It is possible. Veterinary Medical Officers may volunteer for multiple tours up to 365 days. Animal Health Technicians may volunteer for multiple tours up to 221 days per year.



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## **Why should someone join the NAHERC?**

NAHERC offers a unique opportunity to gain new perspectives and experience in emergency veterinary medicine, and provides the opportunity to assist during local, regional or national emergencies.



## **Are there NAHERC teams?**

Veterinarians, Animal Health Technicians, and veterinary students may join NAHERC as individuals. State and local animal health teams may also join NAHERC with the intention of being activated as a NAHERC team, if ever needed for federal service in the event of an emergency. There are Memorandums of Understanding available for State animal health officials to define the role of NAHERC teams.



## **What are my obligations to NAHERC?**

NAHERC members volunteer for all temporary assignments. NAHERC members are not involuntarily drafted for assignments. Assignments or deployments may be as short as three to four weeks, and can be much longer.



## **What if I am sued when working in NAHERC?**

When activated, NAHERC members are temporary federal employees and covered under the Federal Tort Claims Act for malpractice while acting within the scope of federal employment.



## **What if I am injured when working in NAHERC?**

When activated, NAHERC members are temporary federal employees and covered under the Federal Employee Compensation Act.



## **What if I worked for the USDA or other federal agency in the past?**

When hired under direct hire authority, former USDA veterinarians and other former federal veterinarians may be hired at their previous highest grade, if they qualify for the NAHERC Veterinary Medical Officer (VMO) position.



## **What if I received a federal retirement? How will this be affected?**

The monthly retirement annuity would be subtracted from the monthly salary level for the NAHERC VMO. The VMO would earn the remaining amount.



## **What kind of training do NAHERC members receive?**

Right now NAHERC staff is required to complete the ICS 100, 200 & 700 prior to deployment. These courses and other animal health emergency courses are available online at the NAHERC/ISU training site: <https://naherc.sws.iastate.edu/>



## **What is the future of NAHERC?**

NAHERC is currently a strategic reserve intended primarily for an animal disease response, but as the ESF# 11 and the APHIS mission evolves so will NAHERC.



## **Where Do I Get More Information?**

NAHERC Website <http://naherc.aphis.usda.gov/> or e-mail [NAHERC@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:NAHERC@aphis.usda.gov) or <https://naherc.sws.iastate.edu/> or phone (301) 851-3517 or mail 4700 River Road, Attn: NAHERC Coordinator, 5B-02.9, Riverdale, MD 20737-1228

