



US Public Health Service Access Teams

What is a Service Access Team (SAT)? A SAT is a group of US Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps officer responders who can be activated to meet a variety of public health and human service needs following an emergency event. During a Presidentially declared disaster, those individuals most likely to be impacted include the elderly, people with developmental disabilities, people with mental illness, and minors separated from guardians. Once activated, the SAT assesses and monitors ongoing health and human services needs of the affected populations.

SATs are skilled at meeting the social services needs of at-risk individuals including planning and accessing resources for these populations. A SAT can augment the local health workforce by providing resources and assistance to local health authorities and ensuring access to essential services to preserve life and health. The SAT can facilitate communication and advise health-decision makers during disasters. The SAT can help support the discharge planning process for health care institutions and general population shelters following a disaster by connecting individuals to needed services in the community like accessible housing, home health care, and personal assistant services.

SATs can help with:

- **Needs Assessment**
- **Plan Development/Cultural Sensitivity**
- **Advocating/Connecting**
- **Clinical Care Coordination**
- **Continuity/Transition Management**
- **Psycho-Social Management**
- **Reintegration**
- **Confidentiality assurance**

When is it available? During a Presidentially declared disaster, local and state emergency management channels can request a SAT under the Stafford Act, Emergency Support Function (ESF) #8 – Public Health and Medical Services, to assist local health authorities in response and/or recovery efforts throughout the United States. The HHS Secretary or Assistant Secretary for Health has the authority to activate a SAT in response to a request made through the Surgeon General. The cost-share for a State, Tribal, or US territory to implement SAT is typically 25%.

What is the structure of the SAT Program? Each SAT is comprised of ten USPHS Commissioned Corps officer responders, which enables scalability and the ability to provide only those resources needed. For example, a SAT can be divided in half for a smaller response. SATs are capable of providing augmentation to other deployable USPHS elements and often engage in transporting displaced individuals and patient repatriation. A SAT can deploy within 36 hours of activation.

Need More Information? See [Fact Sheet: Service Access Teams](#) or contact the Office of Force Readiness and Deployment by phone at 301-443-3859. You can direct requests for assistance through the ESF #8 coordinator at your State Emergency Operation Center.