



Deployment Narrative Form

Required Fields

Date (MM/DD/YYYY): 11/17/2022

Name (Rank, First, Last, Credentials): LT Christina Waters, MPH

Deployment Team or Tier (e.g. Tier 3): Tier 3

Title/Position at Duty Station (e.g. Epidemiologist): Research Officer

OPDIV: Food & Drug Administration/Office of Regulatory Affairs

Email Address: Christina.waters@fda.hhs.gov

Narrative Questions [respond to as many as applicable]

1. What is your current assignment in USPHS?

I serve as a Research Officer (Chemist) at the FDA's Southeast Food and Feed Lab in Atlanta, GA.

2. What was the mission of your deployment? (e.g. dates, location, and other pertinent details)

ACF/OHSEPR /Hurricane Fiona - San Juan, Puerto Rico October 12, 2022- November 9, 2022. This mission was in support of damage assessment caused by Hurricane Fiona. It was the first of its kind, in that PHS officers collaborated with the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). The goal was to assess Head Starts and childcare facilities for damage to render financial aid.

3. What was your role during this deployment? What skills (scientific, personal, etc.) did you use?

My role was Planning Section Deputy. To prepare for this role, I completed the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, 8-hour Safety Assessment Program (SAP) Evaluator training.

4. Was this your first deployment? Either way, how did you prepare for the deployment, personally or work-wise?

This was my first deployment. I leaned on my mentors and officer friends heavily to get insight on what to pack. Personally, I helped my husband prepare for my absence. We have two small children (1 & 4), so pre-planning was important. I ensured they didn't have any doctor appointments, made sure he had all the insurance information in case they needed medical attention, and finally prepared some meals for a few days.

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5. Do you have any advice or “pearls of wisdom” for fellow officers who are being deployed or are interested in deploying?

Make a check list of items to pack, pack uniforms (uniform essentials) first. Ask questions and be open to learn.

6. What was the most important thing you learned during this deployment?

I learned that working as a team is crucial. Everyone has a role and responsibility to ensure the mission is safe and successful. I also learned the importance of strong communication between support roles such as Planning and Operations, the folks on the ground.

7. What were some of the key challenges that you experienced?

Some IT issues with the equipment provided by the collaborating agency. To avoid this issue in the future, my team members and I created an SOP for future officers to review when collaborating with said agency.

8. What did you enjoy the most (e.g., favorite memory) about this deployment?

Meeting new officers, networking, and meeting the Surgeon General while getting lunch one day.

9. What would you consider to be your major accomplishment stemming from this deployment?

Planned the movement of USPHS officers throughout Puerto Rico to assess impacts to a variety of ACF grantee sites to include Head Start locations, childcare centers, elder care facilities, and community action agencies. Collaborated with Safety Officers and Operations on the ground to ensure the safe travel of teams to 35 of 78 municipalities in Puerto Rico resulting in 237 site assessments.

10. Were there any classes or trainings that helped you in your deployment?

Safety Assessment Program (SAP) Evaluator training and the training on-site provided by the ACF Planning Section Lead was invaluable.

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11. How was your post deployment/reintegration experience? Was it a smooth transition back to your daily activities?

Yes, it was very smooth. I was very pleased with the entire experience.

12. Please feel free to share anything else regarding your deployment to highlight your experiences or to increase the readiness of fellow officers.

I was very nervous about my first deployment, however, after this first experience, I'm ready to go on more and make more impact. Overall, this was a very rewarding experience.

13. Do you consent to your narrative being posted on Twitter? (y/n)

14. Do you consent to your narrative being posted on Facebook? (y/n)

Thank you for your service!

Please send your completed form, along with a personal portrait and any other optional approved media for posting (e.g. photos from your deployment) to photos from your deployment) to LCDR Kari Schlessinger (kschlessinger@bop.gov) and LT Benjamin Patrick (benjamin.o.patrick.mil@mail.mil)