

Standard Operating Guidelines
Nassau County
Community Emergency Response Team

Introduction:

President Bush introduced the Citizens Corps and asked that Americans volunteer their services to improve and safeguard our country. One opportunity for volunteers under the Citizens Corps program is the formation of Community Emergency Response Teams.

I. Purpose:

- A. To establish Guidelines for the activation, notification, coordination, capabilities and responsibilities of Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) throughout Nassau County.

II. Membership:

- A. CERT Membership shall be comprised of volunteers who live or work in Nassau County, who are 18 years old or older and have successfully completed the required Federal CERT curriculum as determined by the Nassau County Office of Emergency Management (OEM).
- B. Junior CERT Membership shall be comprised of volunteers who live in Nassau County, who are between the ages of 14 and 17 years old, have written parental approval to join and have successfully completed the required Federal CERT training as determined by the Nassau County OEM. Junior CERT members can become “adult” CERT members upon reaching the age of 18 years old, provide proof of age and comply with all membership requirements.
- C. Applicants will be subject to a background check.
- D. Persons participating in the CERT program agree to and will abide by the following rules and understand that members will be removed from membership for any of the following:
- conviction of a felony
 - conduct unbecoming a member

- any act of insubordination; neglect of duty
- violation of rules or guidelines governing this program
- failure to maintain annual training hours

III. Administration:

A. The Nassau County OEM shall coordinate the administration of the CERT program in Nassau County. The OEM shall administer any existing CERT grant program that provides for training and maintain documentation of training and distribution of equipment. Equipment includes any item provided by OEM during training.

B. The chain of command within the CERT program will be as follows:

Ongoing Administrative function

- OEM Commissioner or designee
- OEM CERT Program Director
- CERT Team Coordinator
- CERT Deputy Team Coordinator

During Activations

- OEM Commissioner or designee
- OEM CERT Program Director
- CERT Team Leaders
- CERT Team Members

C. Standard Operating Guidelines

- 1) The Policy & Procedure Committee will review the Standard Operating Guidelines, annually, or as needed, for proposed updates and changes.
- 2) The Policy & Procedure Committee will present proposed changes and updates to the Team Coordinators and Deputy Team Coordinators. Team Coordinators and Deputy Team Coordinators may also make recommendations for proposed changes to the Standard Operating Guidelines.
- 3) Proposed changes require a two-third (2/3) majority favorable vote of Team Coordinators and Deputy Team Coordinators present before presentation to OEM.

- 4) The Director, or other approved representative of OEM, reserves the authority to reject any part, or all, of the presented proposed changes to the Standard Operating Guidelines.

D. Committees

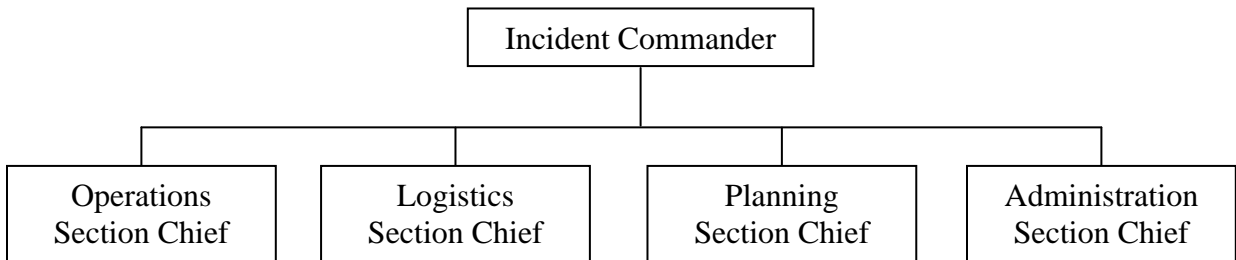
- 1) Committees may be formed or appointed by the OEM Director or other approved representative to: investigate research, prepare or analyze information relative to CERT.
- 2) Non-members may serve on committees as resource persons.

IV. Training

- A. Basic CERT training consists of twenty hours of training to be administered and provided by OEM which meet the Federal guidelines.
- B. Volunteers must complete Basic CERT training within the first twelve (12) months of enrollment to become an active CERT member.
- C. To remain in active status, it is the responsibility of CERT members to attend a mandatory annual Refresher class to be administered and provided by OEM.
- D. Nassau County OEM may designate additional mandatory training requirements.
- E. Members who fail to attend mandatory training will be redesignated as “inactive” CERT members. To regain active status a member must complete all mandatory training no later than two years from the date the member was designated inactive. A member’s failure to complete mandatory training within the two year period will terminate that person’s membership in the CERT program.
- F. OEM may provide additional CERT training for CERT members.
- G. Only active CERT members may attend additional CERT training.

V. Activation

- A. CERT members may be called upon by OEM or specifically identified public safety officials to provide specific aid or assistance in a manner determined by the OEM.
- B. CERT members will be activated only by the Director or other approved representative of the OEM or local jurisdiction OEM when an emergency or other event requires additional human resources for assistance. Junior CERT members must be accompanied by an active “adult” CERT member in order to participate in activation.
- C. CERT members are not emergency services personnel as defined by State law and as such are not exempt from federal, state and local laws when responding to emergencies. CERT members must comply with the requirements of CERT training, as well as complying with all federal, state and local laws when functioning as a CERT member.
- D. CERT members will act first to aid their families and adjacent neighbors. (See Appendix A – CERT Preparedness) Once safety measures have been completed, in a manner directed by the Director or other approved representative of the Nassau County OEM, CERT members will be provided with specific instructions on where to go, and/or Guidelines to initiate the response and recovery process. All instructions will be provided by the Director or other approved representative of the Nassau County OEM to designated Team Leaders, following Incident Command System (ICS) and National Incident Management System (NIMS). Designated Team Leaders will be selected at the time of activation.



ICS Command Function Organization Chart

- E. Designated Team Leaders will set priorities and delegate responsibility and specific assignments for each team member.
- F. Team leaders will be responsible for communications with the Nassau County OEM, following the ICS and NIMS.
- G. Team members will communicate only with the Team Leader as pre-instructed.
- H. Team members will perform tasks equal to their level of training and capability and at no time will they attempt to perform tasks beyond their scope of training and the assignment directive. Refer to the CERT Field Operating Guide (FOG) provided by OEM during training.
- I. Team Leaders and members will standby for further instructions after they have completed the assigned tasks and will await further deployment or dismissal instructions from OEM or the Incident Commander.
- J. After dismissal from the incident, each team will return to their predetermined staging location to critique the situation. The Team Leader, as soon as is possible, will contact OEM to convey the results of the team's critique of the deployment by submitting a written After Action Report.
- K. CERT members will not portray themselves as being employed by or members of the Nassau County Office of Emergency Management. Business cards will be distributed by OEM. Business cards will not display the county seal. Cards will have the CERT logo and OEM email address, and phone number.
- L. All media correspondence will be approved by OEM. Use of the pre-approved media releases only is acceptable.

VI. Equipment

- A. CERT members are provided with basic supplies upon the successful completion of the FEMA approved CERT training course. CERT members understand and agree that equipment and supplies provided to them for training and/or activation is the property of OEM.

- B. CERT members will use the equipment and supplies provided only for training and/or activations.
- C. Equipment, training material and supplies must be returned to the Nassau County OEM when a member resigns from the CERT program or is removed from the membership rolls.

Attachments:

Appendix A – CERT Preparedness

Appendix A

C.E.R.T. PREPAREDNESS

A. Pre-Activation Readiness

Your pre-Activation readiness and your ability to perform your assigned task during an emergency/disaster greatly depend on your personal and family preparedness. In this section we will first review steps you can take to properly prepare yourself for Activation, Check-in and post check-in procedures, and demobilization.

If you know that you are on an Emergency call-up roster of personnel who will work at an incident – or if your day-to-day position is one that would be activated for all incidents reaching a specific size and/or complexity, you will do well to prepare in advance. Knowing what position you will fill on scene will help you prepare, but even if you aren't sure when or how you will be deployed, there are some items you should assemble in advance. Preparing your "CERT BAG" will help ensure that you have everything that you will need and reduce the time between Activation and check in.

Assembling your "CERT BAG"

Your CERT Bag should include all of the items that you received during your basic training. Make sure all items are in good condition (i.e., batteries for flashlight). Additional items you may want to consider are as follows:

Pens/pencils, Paper
Calling Tree
Clipboard
Whistle
Marker
Water bottles

In addition to your CERT bag, you should also prepare a "Go Kit" for your personal items in the event your activation requires an extended period. Below is a list of items you should include in your "Go Kit":

- One or more change of clothing (including shoes) as appropriate to the incident, season, or climate.
- Outerwear, as appropriate to the incident, season, or climate.
- Toiletries and hygiene supplies
- Medication (prescription and over the counter) (Note: If the medication that you take has a shelf life, always keep the newest medication in your Go Kit and replace it with new medication.
- Snacks
- Bring Reading material, portable CD player or other entertainment for your time off.

If you are on the emergency call-up list you should assemble these items and keep them available at all times. If you may only be deployed occasionally, make a checklist of the items that you want to take so that you can gather them quickly, if needed.

B. Activation Procedures

CERT members will be activated only by the Director or other approved representative of the OEM or local jurisdiction OEM when an emergency or other event requires additional human resources for assistance. Here are some examples of question you should ask when receiving your Activation notification:

- When and where should I report?
- To whom will I be reporting?
- How long should I plan to be activated?
- How many CERT Volunteers are needed?

You may not be able to gather all you information you need at the time of activation, but you should gather as much information as you can. The next step is to activate your “Call Tree”. Prepare a list of CERT volunteers who will be responding to the activation and proceed to the “mustering” site.

C. Check-In and Post-Check-In Procedures

Once you have arrived at the mustering site, you should immediately check in as directed when you are activated. After checking in, report to your supervisor immediately and provide the list of CERT volunteers who will be responding. Designated Team Leaders will be selected at the time of activation by approved representative of the OEM or local jurisdiction OEM. If you are designated as a Team Leader, get the information that is critical to your job. You may need to ask the following questions:

- What is the current situation?
- What are my specific job responsibilities?
- Who are my co-workers
- Where will I be working?
- What equipment is available to help me do my job?
- What are the procedures for obtaining additional supplies and/or equipment?
- Who do I see if I need help?
- Where will I eat? (If applicable)
- Where will I sleep? (If applicable)

Take notes during your briefing, you will then need to brief your Team members. As a Team Leader, you will need to maintain a log, indicating the names of the personnel assigned to you and the activities accomplished during your operational period.

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Acknowledgement Form

I hereby certify that I have read and fully understand the information presented in the Nassau County Community Emergency Response Team (*CERT*) Program’s Standard Operating Guidelines document. Further, I acknowledge that in my decision to respond “when called” to an emergency or disaster situations within Nassau County, it is my duty to obey all federal, state, and local laws while functioning as a *CERT* member and follow the directions of the emergency response agencies and supervisors appointed over me.

I further understand that the equipment being issued to me is property of Nassau County Citizen Corps, federally funded, for use when activated as a *CERT*, and subject to Federal use guidelines.

Signature of *CERT* member

DATE

Printed *CERT* member name