To become an approved and recognized local or county Community Emergency Response Program (CERT) operating in West Virginia, you must meet the following requirements as outlined below. These include both state and federal guidelines.

Purpose: The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program educates volunteers about disaster preparedness for the hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. CERT offers a consistent, nationwide approach to volunteer training and organization that professional responders can rely on during disaster situations, which allows them to focus on more complex tasks. Through CERT, the capabilities to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters is built and enhanced.

Requirements for Approval

1. **Sponsorship:** be sponsored and operated by a local emergency response organization such as the local Fire Department or Office of Emergency Management (OEM). *Teen CERT Programs must be operated by its school or youth group-based sponsor.*

2. **Training:**

   - **MUST utilize FEMA's CERT Basic Training Course Curriculum,** materials found at https://www.ready.gov/community-emergency-response-team

   - **MUST utilize a CERT Trained Instructor. Requirements to become a CERT Instructor:**

     o Complete the Basic CERT Course (in-class) or *IS-317: Introduction to Community Emergency Response Teams* (on-line), PLUS FEMA's *E0428 CERT Train-the-Trainer.*

     o **OR**

     o **For 1ˢᵗ responders with extensive training and instruction experience**: Complete *IS-317: Introduction to Community Emergency Response Teams* (on-line) and apprentice with a current CERT trainer who is approved and recommended by Volunteer West Virginia.

     o CERT Instructors can use subject matter experts for specific CERT unit delivery.

     o Recommended: CERT Program Manager Course. For more information about training and materials, contact Volunteer West Virginia at 304-558-0111.

3. **Exercise/Drill:** Participate in a multi-agency exercise or at least conduct a CERT drill or exercise once a year. *N/A to Teen CERT programs.*

4. **Register your CERT program on the National CERT website** at https://community.fema.gov/Register. *OPTIONAL for Teen CERT programs.*

Documentation Requirements**

1. **Submit a letter of endorsement from the sponsor agency (Fire Dept. or OEM) to Volunteer West Virginia.** *Teen CERT Programs must submit a letter of endorsement from the school or youth group sponsor. If they plan to deploy outside of their school setting/hours, they must submit an additional letter of support from a local emergency response organization (Fire Dept. or OEM).*

2. **Sign and submit the *CERT Program Memorandum of Understanding (MOU*)** provided by Volunteer West Virginia.

   **Submit ALL documentation to Volunteer West Virginia to: Gina.L.Namay@wv.gov