



West Virginia CERT Program Approval Policy

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

Requirements for Approval

1. **Sponsorship:** Must 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 a school or youth group-based sponsor.*
2. **Training:**
 - **MUST** utilize FEMA's [CERT Basic Training Curriculum](#). See [Instructor](#) & [Participant](#) Manuals.
 - **MUST** utilize a qualified CERT Trained Instructor. Requirements to become a CERT Instructor:
 - o **For 1st responders with training & instruction experience:**
 - Complete the online [IS-317: Introduction to Community Emergency Response Teams](#)
 - Complete FEMA's [CERT Train-the-Trainer Virtual Course \(K0428\)](#). Enter the course number K0428 into the "course field" to pull up the schedule. It's offered several times a year.
 - o **For a lay volunteer:**
 - Must have prior training/instructor experience.
 - Attend and complete a locally delivered Basic CERT Course.
 - Complete FEMA's [CERT Train-the-Trainer course \(K0428\)](#)
 - o **Strongly Recommend:** FEMA's [CERT Program Manager Virtual Course \(K0427\)](#) - Enter the course number K0427 into the "course field" to pull up the schedule. It's offered several times a year.
 - o **Trained CERT Instructors** can utilize subject matter experts to help deliver specific CERT units.

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.*

Documentation Requirements

1. **Submit a letter of endorsement from the sponsor agency (Fire Dept. or OEM) to Volunteer West Virginia.** *Teen CERT Programs: submit a letter of endorsement from the school or youth group sponsor. If a Teen CERT Team plans to deploy outside of the normal 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 Gina.L.Namay@wv.gov**

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