



West Virginia CERT Program Approval Policy

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 & 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:** 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](#)
 - **MUST** utilize a qualified CERT Trained Instructor. Requirements to become a CERT Instructor:
 - **For 1st responders with training & instruction experience:**
 - Complete [IS-317: Introduction to Community Emergency Response Teams](#) (online independent study) or attend a local Basic CERT Training.
 - Complete FEMA's [K0428 CERT Train-the-Trainer](#) (virtual delivery). However, if taking this course is true hardship, the first responder can request Volunteer WV to set up an apprenticeship with a current CERT Trainer, if available.
 - **For a lay volunteer:**
 - Must have prior training/instructor experience.
 - Attend and complete a locally delivered Basic CERT Course.
 - Complete FEMA's [K0428 CERT Train-the-Trainer](#) (virtual delivery)
 - **Strongly Recommend:** FEMA's [K0427 CERT Program Manager Course](#) (virtual delivery).
 - **Trained CERT Instructors** can use subject matter experts to assist with specific CERT unit delivery.
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](#) -- *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: 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

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