



**Montgomery County (Maryland)
Community Emergency Response Team
—Policies and Procedures—**

Effective from January 1, 2013

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Change History

October 2013:	Modified location of Steering Committee Meeting. Added Change History table.
June 2014	Inserted Annex E: Social Media Policy. Approved at the June Steering Cmte Mtg

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to establish policies and procedures for the members and their training, activation, activities, and coordination as part of the Montgomery County (Maryland) Community Emergency Response Team (MC-CERT).

These guidelines for the MC-CERT program are not to supersede or replace any local, State, or Federal Standard Operating Procedures for Emergency Management and use of volunteers.

This document should be annually reviewed by a committee appointed by the President and may be revised as needed. Changes will be subject to the approval of a majority of the Executive Committee (see section 6, Governance).

2. Mission

Through training, organization, and service, to provide opportunities for individuals in Montgomery County, Maryland, to be better prepared for emergencies and disasters, and to support Montgomery County first response and emergency organizations in protecting the community in emergency and disaster situations, as well as non-emergency deployments.

The MC-CERT program is one of the family of programs under the Citizen Corps, a program of the US Department of Homeland Security. The MC-CERT training meets and exceeds the requirements of the standard national CERT training program.

As stated in the CERT national web site, “[t]he Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates people about disaster preparedness for 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. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community.”

3. Introduction

Montgomery County recognizes the need for an organized and trained group of volunteers that respond to a disaster or the imminent threat of disaster within Montgomery County. This group of volunteers is known as the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). The CERT program operates under the Montgomery County Fire Rescue Service (MCFRS).

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When activated for an emergency, MC-CERT will function under the direction of MCFRS. MC-CERT members are trained to operate independently for a given period of time when normal emergency response services are overwhelmed. This is usually anywhere from a few hours to several days.

MC-CERT trains and prepares individuals in Montgomery County communities, businesses, schools, and institutions in emergency preparedness and basic disaster response techniques and enables them to prepare, as volunteers, to take an active role in providing critical support to Emergency Management and emergency response personnel during emergencies. In addition, training that CERT members receive will help them to assist effectively in other smaller scale mishaps that are within the scope of everyday events. Members may be used for various assignments, which may include neighborhood, county, state, or national activation.

MC-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. Therefore, all MC-CERT members must use due care and diligence when responding or reporting to emergencies.

MC-CERT training and program maintenance will be directed through the MCFRS, with additional training conducted by recognized and appropriate instructors and organizations. MC-CERT may organize and present additional training as appropriate to fulfill the mission of the organization.

4. Concept of MC-CERT Operations in Montgomery County, Maryland

The MC-CERT program emphasizes a dual approach:

- **Limited Self-Activation:** Neighbor helping neighbor as private citizens, not as CERT members, using their CERT training, until County first-response personnel or other appropriate response organizations arrive on the scene to assume responsibility.
- **Official Activation:** Support to Montgomery County emergency response agencies as needed and under the specific direction of these designated County response organizations.

In disaster situations, first-response and emergency services within Montgomery County may be overwhelmed. In such cases, MC-CERT members may respond in the same manner that citizens trained in first aid may respond to an immediate need in their immediate vicinity. Wherever possible, MC-CERT members should work as a team while conducting operations until emergency service personnel gain access to and stabilize the situation.

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MC-CERT members are deployable for any type of incident including but not limited to natural disasters, technological hazards, man-made or terrorist incidents, and special events.

4.1 Authorities

MC-CERT is governed by the Montgomery County Division of Fire Rescue Services, the Montgomery County Fire And Rescue Policy 06-08, issued on 09/15/2008.

MC-CERT is deployed by MCFRS or other authorized agent to assist in performing tasks to support emergency response, within the scope of their training, common sense, the Incident Command System, and recognized safety procedures.

4.2 Legal Protection for MC-CERT Members

While MC-CERT members are officially deployed as a team by MCFRS or other County authority specified by MCFRS, certain Montgomery County protections apply, including Medical, Worker's Compensation, and Liability. Specific information about this protection is available from the MC-CERT Program Officer.

While MC-CERT members are officially deployed as a team by MCFRS or other county authority specified by MCFRS, they are covered by the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 of the United States that, generally speaking, provides immunity from tort claims that might be filed against the volunteers of nonprofit organizations. While deployed as part of a MC-CERT, individuals are not covered by the Good Samaritan Act of the State of Maryland, which applies to individuals not part of a team. It is the responsibility of each member to be informed of their legal liabilities and protections and to act at all times in a reasonable manner, according to his or her own level of training and abilities.

4.3 MC-CERT Organization

MC-CERT follows the Incident Command System (ICS) and while operating in the context of MCFRS, under the Integrated Emergency Command System (IECS). In non-emergency situations, the MC-CERT organization will operate under a modified ICS. MC-CERT will be managed and coordinated within the structure of the Incident Command System as implemented by MCFRS or other deploying agent.

4.4 MC-CERT Program Manager

The CERT Program Manager is a civilian employee of MCFRS and reports to the Chief Division of Volunteer Services. Absent other instructions from the Fire Chief, the CERT Program Manager is the sole liaison officer between the volunteer CERT organization and the MCFRS. The CERT Program Manager is considered "CERT Command" for IECS purposes. The CERT Program Manager is the sole authority in MC-CERT for budget or grant discussions with the county, and is the default PIO for CERT.

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4.5 Chain of Command

The chain of command for MC-CERT daily operations will be as follows:

- 1) MC-CERT Program Manager
- 2) MC-CERT President
- 3) MC-CERT Vice-President
- 4) MC-CERT Coordinators
- 5) MC-CERT Members

The chain of command for MC-CERT operations while deployed will be as follows:

- 1) MC-CERT Program Manager
- 2) MC-CERT Team Leader(s)
- 3) MC-CERT Members

While the MC-CERT President may, in consultation with the Program Manager, appoint or relieve CERT Team Leaders, during activation the MC-CERT Team Leader will “outrank” any CERT member or officer (*except* the MC-CERT Program Manager) regardless of position.

5. Membership

5.1 Categories of Membership

There are three basic categories of MC-CERT membership:

5.1.1 Category 1 (CERT Trained Individuals): Composed of people who want to take the course only so they can better understand, prepare for, and respond to disasters in their own neighborhood or work, school, or recreational surroundings. They are not interested in on-going training or in being a part of any CERT-related community service projects. They benefit the community by being better able to respond should an emergency arise and help their communities be better prepared (including giving readiness trainings, alerting community of upcoming weather events, giving preparedness tips, etc.). They are encouraged to sign up for Alert Montgomery. For these members, the CERT organization is not obligated to provide clothing or equipment.

5.1.2 Category 2 (CERT Reserve Team): Composed of people who will take part in non-emergency CERT events and maintain current levels of training (minimum). They are eligible to may take part in the management of on-going CERT activities. They are encouraged to take part frequently in community service and outreach events. They may also be called upon to respond should a local or national emergency arise. They must sign up for Alert Montgomery.

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5.1.3 Category 3 (CERT Active Team): Composed of people who receive ongoing training and must maintain currency as specified for various areas of training. These people are part of the on-call roster for possible activation to assist with emergencies – ranging from a large fire to a major disaster. This category of membership is required in order to be an MC-CERT instructor. Category 3 members must meet all requirements for Category 2 members. In addition, Category 3 members must maintain their currency in all skills related to response. Category 3 members will take part frequently in community service projects that CERT coordinators will arrange and establish; they may also take part in the management of on-going CERT activities. These members are expected to complete 10 hours of documented CERT participation each calendar quarter and are required to sign up for Alert Montgomery.

Category 3 members will be placed on an on-call rotation for quick onset events. They will also be grouped by their local fire battalion area so they can be activated in their local portion of the County.

5.2 Requirements for Membership

In order to be a member of MC-CERT in any category, an individual must:

- Live, work, or congregate in Montgomery County the majority of the year
- Be at least 18 years of age
- Attend the Montgomery County-specific CERT training and receive a Completion of Course certificate
- Sign the MC-CERT Code of Conduct and abide by all regulations. Failure to do so could result in revocation of MC-CERT membership. The MC-CERT Code of Conduct is included as Annex A in this document.

Note: To become Category 2 or Category 3 members of MC-CERT, individuals will be required to fill out appropriate forms to be provided during the MC-CERT training program. These forms will be returned to the Training or Human Resources Coordinator for consideration. Individuals in Category 1 wishing to become Category 2 or 3 members should inquire of the Training or HR Coordinator for the appropriate forms. (Applicants wishing to become Category 2 or Category 3 members will be subject to fingerprinting and a background check by the appropriate government agencies, as managed by the Montgomery County government.)

5.3 Teen CERT

Individuals between the ages of 14 and 18 may be included in programs of MC-CERT known as “Teen CERT.”

Teen CERT members may take part only in non-emergency activities of MC-CERT. Teen CERT members will not participate in overnight activities of MC-CERT.

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Whenever a member of Teen CERT takes part in an MC-CERT activity, an adult member of MC-CERT must be specifically assigned as the Teen CERT Team Leader with responsibility for the safety and accountability of each Teen CERT member.

When a graduate of a Teen CERT program conducted by MC-CERT attains the age of 18 and if that individual has maintained currency through training and participation in Teen CERT or similar programs, that individual may become an adult member of MC-CERT. In doing so, that individual is required to complete the requirements for whichever category of MC-CERT membership is desired.

5.4 Maintaining Currency in Specific Categories of Membership

Depending on the category of membership, MC-CERT members must achieve specific continuing education and refresher trainings in order to be considered “Current” in their membership.

5.4.1 Category 1 Currency Requirements

- Maintain current contact information in MC-CERT’s volunteer management information system.
- Maintain their own training records in the event they wish to convert to Category 2 or 3 membership.

5.4.2 Category 2 and Category 3 Currency Requirements

- Maintain current contact information.
- Agree to be a member of MC-CERT for at least one year.
- Participate in at least 10 hours of MC-CERT activities each calendar quarter. See Annex D.
- Keep their first aid/CPR certifications current.
- Inform the MC-CERT President or Program Manager about any extended absences from the county.
- Be registered in the MCFRS Personnel Information Management System (PIMS) and have applied for a County MCFRS ID card.

5.4.3 Additional Category 3 Currency Requirements

- In addition to the requirements stated above, Category 3 members are required to participate in an on-call roster system as specified in Annex E.

Category 2 and 3 members are considered to be “in good standing” if they are current on their CERT participation hours. Category 2 and 3 members are eligible to vote (after six months in good standing) and to run for office (after 12 months in good standing).

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6. Governance

MC-CERT is governed by the following bodies:

6.1 Executive Committee

MC-CERT Executive Committee comprises the four MC-CERT elected officers and a representative of MCFRS who is authorized to commit resources in support of MC-CERT (generally the CERT Program Manager).

6.2 Elected Officers: There are four elected officers. (See 6.3 below.) Elections are held once a year. If an elected officer cannot fulfill his or her term, the remaining MC-CERT officer will appoint a replacement to fill out that officer's term. Candidates for elective positions must be current CERT members of Category 2 or 3.

6.3 Responsibilities of Elected Officers:

6.3.1 President

- Provide overall guidance for all CERT training and operations
- Be accountable to the CERT Program Manager for team operations and status
- Appoint qualified CERT members for committee chairs, team leaders (for deployments), instructors, and other positions as needed
- Provide leadership for General Membership (monthly) meetings and Steering Committee meetings
- Discuss team plans, goals, accomplishments, and failures with team
- Ensure overall team readiness and full compliance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- Serve as corporate officer when/if CERT creates a 501(c) 3 corporation

6.3.2 Vice-President

- Together with the President, coordinate committee and staff activities
- Together with the President, run Steering Committee meetings
- Stand in for the President, as may be required
- Serve as corporate officer when/if CERT creates a 501(c) 3 corporation

6.3.3 Secretary

- Prepare and publish meeting agendas
- Ensure that meeting minutes are recorded and circulated
- With the HR Coordinator, maintain and provide current team membership roster information and email list
- With the Training Coordinator, ensure that records of training and experience of members are maintained

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- Provide capability for maintaining accountability for CERT personnel during activation and tracking volunteer hours
- With the Operations Coordinator, maintain records of deployment (dates and activities) of all CERT members
- With the Technology Coordinator, monitor website feedback and resolve or forward emails to the appropriate person to handle questions and issues raised

6.3.4 Treasurer

- Track expenditures and submit expense requests to the CERT Program Manager
- Provide oversight on all accounting procedures, as they become required
- Maintain records to support applications for federal and other grants
- Oversee fundraising efforts for equipment and unfunded needs
- Together with the CERT Program Manager, coordinate preparation and writing of materials for grant proposals

6.4 Steering Committee

The MC-CERT Steering Committee consists of all elected officers and all appointed coordinators, as well as the MC-CERT Program Manager. Additional MC-CERT members who are interested in assuming ongoing responsibilities within the CERT program and invited to join the Steering Committee.

6.5 Appointed Coordinators

In order to be appointed to a coordinator position, a candidate must be an MC-CERT member in good standing for at least six months. MC-CERT coordinators are typically needed for the following:

- Operations
- Communications
- Public Affairs (includes Outreach, Speakers bureau, special programs with other organizations, etc.)
- Logistics
- Training
- Training Registrar
- Social
- Technology
- Project-related appointments
- others as needed...

7. Election of Officers

Elections are held every year for the four officer positions; the term of office is one year.

7.1 Eligibility to Run for Office

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Candidates for elected office shall have been registered in the MCFRS's Personnel Information Management System (PIMS) and a member of MC-CERT in good standing for at least one year from the beginning of the month in which the election is to take place.

Candidates for office must be Category 2 or Category 3 members.

7.2 Eligibility to Vote

Voters must be members in good standing for at least six months as of the beginning of the month in which the election is to take place.

7.3 Nomination Process

Nominations must be received and publicized two weeks before the meeting in which the election is to take place.

Potential candidates must send an email to the officer designated in the solicitation for nominations indicating which office they are running for, together with a short biography and statement which will be emailed to the membership.

Candidates are strongly requested to be present at the meeting in which the election is to take place. No nominations will be received on the day of the election.

7.4 Voting Process

Elections will be held annually, during the designated General Meeting. Voting is limited to members in good standing who attend the General Meeting or who email their ballots through the procedure detailed prior to the election. The winner will be announced at the General Meeting during which the election takes place.

7.5 Transition to New Elected Officers

Transition to the new elected officers will occur between the end of the meeting during which the election takes place and the beginning of the following meeting and will include passing briefing items and all documentation.

Both incoming and outgoing officers will work together with the MC-CERT Program Manager to ensure a smooth transition.

Appointed Coordinators may retain their positions pending review and reassignment by the newly elected officers.

8. Training

8.1 MC-CERT Basic Training, including Montgomery County-Specific Training

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The basic CERT training consists of disaster preparedness, MC-CERT concept of operations, simple fire suppression, disaster medical operations (including first aid and CPR), damage assessment, light search and rescue, disaster psychology, team organization, terrorism awareness, NIMS, and ICS; also included are skills-development exercises and one or more prolonged team-based exercises.

In addition to the national standard, the MC-CERT basic training program includes the following Montgomery County-specific training:

- Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
- Clue awareness (for missing persons searches)
- Preparedness for households with companion animals
- Montgomery County-specific additional damage assessment training
- Use of radios (including use of both MC-CERT-issued and MCFRS-issued radios) and good communication practices

8.2 Self-Study and Continuing Training

Individuals interested in completing the FEMA CERT online course are encouraged to do so, but this course is not accepted as a substitute for the group class. Members are encouraged to seek additional training through FEMA Emergency Management Institute (EMI) independent study (IS) courses, and other sources for online and classroom training.

8.3 Skills Refresher Training

Two refresher training opportunities will be offered and one practice exercise will be conducted during each calendar year. Refresher medical first aid/CPR courses will be offered annually for all members.

8.4 Train-the-Trainer Classes

Train-the-Trainer (TTT) classes that are FEMA-approved and MC-CERT-specific are conducted periodically for MC-CERT members. These classes include a standard minimum number of hours of classroom training, self-study, and practice teaching. Graduates of the TTT classes support the MC-CERT training program; however, completion of the TTT course does not automatically imply acceptance as an MC-CERT instructor.

8.5 Training Records

In collaboration with the Training Registrar, the Human Resources Coordinator maintains training records for each MC-CERT member, to keep track of training accomplishments (including currency) and to select team members for specific deployment based on training and skills. Members may be required to maintain their

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own records of currency in the MC-CERT volunteer management system; members are responsible for retaining their own certificates and other proof of training completion.

8.6 Charges for Training

Charges for all classes/courses are dependent upon receiving support funding. If no funding is available, the cost is assumed by the member taking the class/course.

8.7 Training and Participation Requirements

MC-CERT members will be required to attend a minimum of ten hours of participation per calendar quarter. Training and other activities that are acceptable for this continuing participation requirement are shown in Annex D.

Participation hours may include participation in exercises, activations, public information and outreach activities, meeting attendance, subcommittee activities, and other approved activities.

Training will be provided at MC-CERT monthly meetings. Additional training opportunities may be open to MC-CERT members at local, regional, or state sponsored events, and will be publicized to MC-CERT members.

It is the responsibility of each member to receive the required hours of continuing training each year to renew membership and to provide appropriate proof (i.e. certificate, attendance roster, letter of appreciation, etc.) to the HR department. Depending on the information management systems available, members may be required to maintain their own training records in a web-based volunteer management system.

9. Meetings

9.1 General Membership Meetings

General membership meetings are held once each month. Members are expected to attend general meetings, which can be applied toward the 10-hour per calendar quarter participation requirement for Category 2 and Category 3 members. (See Annex D.)

In 2013, unless otherwise specified, General Meetings are held the second Thursday of each month, from 7:00 to 9:00 pm, in the Auditorium of the Executive Office Building, 101 Monroe Street, Rockville, Maryland.

General meetings may include ongoing training, recognition events, guest speakers, social events, etc. General meetings are open to the public.

9.2 Steering Committee (SC) meetings

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Steering Committee meetings will be held once each month. In 2013, unless otherwise specified, SC meetings are held the first Monday of every month, from 7:00 to 9:00 pm, in the 2nd Floor conference room of the Executive Office Building, 101 Monroe Street, Rockville, Maryland.

The purpose of SC meetings is to identify appropriate program goals, assign responsibilities, mobilize the necessary resources, and track progress. Prior to each Steering Committee meeting, a notice will be sent to the membership and minutes will be taken for future reference.

Officers and coordinators are expected to attend each SC meeting or provide a written report to the President of progress in their assigned area.

MC-CERT members in good standing who are interested in taking on long-term, ongoing CERT leadership are welcome to attend SC meetings. SC meetings are not open to the public.

10. Reports and Record-Keeping

Reports and records will be kept by the relevant coordinator (HR Coordinator, Logistics, Treasurer, etc.) and will include the following:

10.1 Membership Information (HR and Technology Coordinators)

- Current list of members (all categories)
- 24-hour contact information for each member
- “Hold Harmless” Form, signed copies of the Code of Conduct, and other important membership documents
- Training status
- Category of membership
- All certifications (with expiration dates, when possible)
- Tracking of hours of service, including all special events and meetings attended
- Duration of service and other noteworthy accomplishments of members, for the purpose of recognition

NOTE: Members may be required to maintain their own records of currency in MC-CERT’s volunteer management system. Members in all categories are urged to retain copies of certificates and other proof of training and participation.

10.2 Financial Information (Treasurer)

- Expenditures
- Income, including donations and fundraising

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- Background materials used for grant proposals

10.3 Supply and Equipment Information (Logistics Coordinator)

- Inventory of equipment, including specific information such as
 - item description
 - model, part, or similar number
 - cost
 - source
 - normal storage facility
 - current location and person to whom the equipment has been assigned
 - maintenance requirements and schedule
 - responsibilities
- Usage and replacement of supplies
- Wish list of desired items, including all specifics of item number and description, source, cost, etc.

11. Communications

11.1 Administrative Communications

- Monthly emailed newsletter with news items, reminders of upcoming events and training, solicitation for personnel for events, preparedness tips, calendar, and features.
- Routine announcements and notifications
- Mass communications to membership (emails to subsets of membership for specific uses)

11.2 Operational Communication – see Annex B

12. Finances

12.1 Accounting

The Steering Committee will be given a quarterly accounting of all funds, with a listing of expenditures and income. Expenditure of funds for any item or activity must be approved by the Program Manager and the President.

The MC-CERT Program Manager will ensure that funds designated for MC-CERT be accounted for properly within the specific line-item for MC-CERT in the MCFRS accounting system, and will be the liaison between MC-CERT and MCFRS in these matters.

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12.2 Grants, Donations, and Fundraising

All fundraising must be approved by the Program Manager and the President. Members are encouraged to present ideas and information at the monthly meetings or at any time on any potential grants or fundraisers. Should a grant or fundraiser be approved, a special coordinator may be appointed to support the Program Manager in implementing the activity.

Donations will be accepted if offered. However, donations are not required from any agency or group for which an emergency service is performed.

13. Activation, Call-Out, and Response Procedures and Standards

13.1 During Emergencies

- MC-CERT will be called upon by MCFRS to provide specific emergency-related services, to be determined and approved by the MC-CERT Program Manager.
- Activation is only by the authority of the MC-CERT Program Manager or designee. At no time may any MC-CERT or member acting as part of a team be activated or activate themselves without authorization. Should a member respond to an emergency without official activation, he/she is deemed to be responding as a private citizen, not as a CERT member.
- MC-CERT members are required to respond with full equipment, supplies, and appropriate clothing for the weather conditions and the activity. The team should be prepared for up to twelve-hour shifts.
- MC-CERT members will go to the scene in as few vehicles as possible. Upon arrival, vehicle(s) will be parked in a location so as not to interfere with scene operations. MC-CERT Team Leader will advise the scene Incident Commander of their arrival and verify their assignment. The team will remain on site until released by the Incident Commander or relieved by another CERT team.
- MC-CERTs will be activated by the MC-CERT Program Manager when an emergency or other event requires additional human resources for assistance. These teams will follow the chain of command as outlined above and as defined for the purposes of the specific activation.
- MC-CERT trained individuals will act first to aid their families and adjacent neighbors.
- Once neighborhood safety has been ensured, individuals who are members of MC-CERT may be assigned to specific MC-CERT teams to assess damage, identify problems, and conduct size-ups while in route to their designated staging location.
- The CERT Team Leader will contact the CERT Program Manager with size-up information and will wait for activation deployment instructions.

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- MC-CERT Program Manager will provide MC-CERT Team Leaders with specific instructions on where to go and how to accomplish assigned tasks.
- MC-CERT Program Manager will select a Team Leader from those present. The Team Leader will provide for safety by ensuring that all team members have completed MC-CERT training, have the appropriate safety and other equipment necessary, and are physically capable of performing the assigned tasks.
- Team Leaders will set priorities and delegate responsibility and specific assignments for each team member.
- Teams will always have a minimum of two (2) members before activating, and those teammates shall stay together until reassigned.
- Team Leaders will be responsible for the team communications with the CERT PM.
- Team members will communicate only with the Team Leader or as instructed by the Team Leader.
- Team members must stay together as assigned and will not leave their assigned locations or stray from their assigned tasks without specific instructions from their Team Leader.
- Team members must inform Team Leaders of their skills, abilities, and limitations and will perform only those tasks equal to their level of training and proficiency. At no time will they attempt to perform tasks beyond their scope of training, their physical abilities, and their assigned tasks.
- For the entire duration of a deployment, the MC-CERT Team Leader will appoint a Personnel Accountability Officer to ensure that all MC-CERT members taking part in the activity are accounted for throughout the activity. Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) checks will be performed frequently during an event.
- Team Leaders and members will await further instructions after they have completed the assigned task(s) and will await further deployment or dismissal instructions from the CERT Program Manager.
- After dismissal from the incident, each team will return to their predetermined staging location to critique the situation. The team leader will, as soon as possible, contact the CERT PM to convey the results of the team's critique of the deployment.
- Once dismissed from the activity, at the Team Leader's or the Program Manager's discretion, team members will report their safe arrival at home or at the designated off-duty area.

13.2 During Non-Emergencies

- MC-CERT will be called upon frequently for special occasion functions, such as parades, outreach activities, large community events, etc.

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- When the MC-CERT teams are activated for these types of events, the same organizational structure and chain of command will be followed as previously outlined in these guidelines to ensure accountability and safety to all members and the public that we are assisting.
- Procedures to ensure safety and accountability of personnel, as well as an orderly team structure, will be used, similar to those shown above (see 13.1) for emergencies.

13.2 Any Activation Outside of Montgomery County

- MC-CERT team(s) will be activated for out-of-county response only at the direction of the CERT Program Manager.
- MC-CERT team members who are deployed outside of our county must be prepared to sustain themselves for a period of 24-hours (food, water, personal supplies, money, fuel, etc.).
- An MC-CERT Team Leader will be appointed to work closely with the MC-CERT Program Manager to facilitate response.
- The MC-CERT Program Manager will provide directions and point of contact for the deployed team(s).
- The MC-CERT Program Manager is responsible for arranging the localized deployment and accountability of the deployed team(s).
- The requesting agent should provide the following information to the MC-CERT Program Manager:
 - What skills are needed
 - What tools the team should bring
 - When the team is needed
 - When the team will be released
 - Where the team will report
 - Who the team will be under the direction of
 - Who the team will report to
 - How many team members are needed
 - How long the team members will be needed
 - Other pertinent information

14. Equipment and Supplies

- Upon completion of the MC-CERT course and registration as an MC-CERT member, MC-CERT members in Category 2 and 3 only are provided with a CERT backpack containing basic supplies. The provision of these supplies is contingent upon continued funding.
- MC-CERT members are responsible for replenishing their own supplies contained within their backpacks.

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- MC-CERT will provide team equipment and supplies for training and for activation. The equipment and supplies are maintained and distributed through the MC-CERT Program Manager and the MC-CERT Logistics Coordinator.
- Persons participating in the MC-CERT program agree to and understand that equipment and supplies provided to them for training and/or activation is the property of the MC-CERT.
- Members will use the team equipment and supplies provided by MC-CERT only for MC-CERT training sessions and activations.
- Members will maintain individual and team equipment and supplies in proper working condition and will report the location of team equipment to the Logistics Coordinator (or Logistics Administrative Coordinator).
- Members will report damaged equipment and supplies to the MC-CERT Program Manager immediately.
- Equipment and supplies must be returned to the MC- CERT Program Manager when a member:
 - Resigns from the MC-CERT program
 - Is removed from membership for Code of Conduct violations

Should a member be dismissed or withdraw from the MC-CERT program, the backpack, equipment, and unused supplies must be returned to the CERT program or reimburse the program the cost. (Information about the cost of issued equipment is available from the MC-CERT Program Coordinator.)

15. MC-CERT Team Member Safety and Wellbeing [Section to be written]

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Annexes

- A. Code of Conduct**
- B. Operations Communications (to be written)**
- C. Field Operations Guide (to be written)**
- D. Activities That Count for Continuing Training and Service Requirements (to be written)**
- E. On-Call Service (to be written)**
- F. Organizational Charts (when deployed and when not deployed) (to be written)**

Montgomery County (Maryland) Community Emergency Response Team
—Annex A: Code of Conduct—
Effective from January 1, 2013

Annex A. Code of Conduct

The Montgomery County (MD) Community Emergency Response Team (MC-CERT) hereby publishes its standards of conduct which apply to all volunteers and trainees, effective January 1, 2013.

- CONTEXT** This Code of Conduct incorporates the standards which apply to employees and volunteers of the Montgomery County Division of Fire Rescue Services under the jurisdiction of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Commission (Executive Regulation No. 22-00 AM). The purpose of this document is to adopt and promote a code of ethics and conduct to govern the on-duty behavior of MC-CERT members and trainees. This Code is not intended to invalidate, replace, or supersede the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Commission (Executive Regulation No. 22-00 AM). MC CERT is covered by the Montgomery County Fire And Rescue Policy 06-08 issued on 09/15/2008. Volunteers and trainees who do not follow these rules will be subject to disciplinary action.
- DEFINITIONS** Definitions are as shown in the Code of Conduct promulgated by the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Commission (Executive Regulation No. 22-00 AM) and in the MC-CERT Policies & Procedures Handbook, dated May 1, 2012, as amended and augmented thereafter.
- AMENDMENTS** Amendments to this Code of Conduct will be discussed by members of the Steering Committee and require a majority vote of the Executive Committee for enactment.

Standards of Behavior

MC-CERT expects that all volunteers and volunteers-in-training will win the public trust, first of all, because of excellence in behavior. While on duty or at any CERT events and while wearing any CERT logo items, MC-CERT expects all members to perform as follows:

- Wear designated CERT and MC-CERT uniform items while on duty. Return issued CERT and MC-CERT items and ID cards promptly when requested.
- If requested, wear CERT ID card in a visible location. If required, carry appropriate credentials.
- Be free of intoxicants.
- Show respect to everyone and act appropriately and responsibly.
- Be law-abiding. Cooperate with law enforcement personnel.
- Do not bring weapons to any CERT events or carry them while deployed. (Utility knives, multi-tools, scissors, etc. are considered tools and not weapons unless used in a threatening manner.)
- Do not express political and/or ideological opinions.

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Effective from January 1, 2013

- Do not wear CERT attire while off duty, particularly if you are engaged in activities that are off-limits while on duty.
- Do not use the MC-CERT name, logo, or 'brand' for any outside activity or fundraising effort without the express written permission of the CERT Program Manager.

Standards of Operations

MC-CERT requires that its members follow the chain of command as defined for each activity. MC-CERT expects all members to perform as follows:

- Stay in touch with your designated supervisor, operate within the specified Incident Command structure, and be guided by the Incident Action Plan (IAP) for that activity.
- Obey the directions of any assigned MC-CERT Team Leaders.
- Document experience and submit information to the designated authority as soon as possible.
- Do not enter private property without the permission of the owner or incident authority or without escort by law enforcement. (The only exception is to protect life in an immediate emergency, as specified in local and state laws.)

Standards of Safety

MC-CERT expects all members to perform as follows:

- Do not self-deploy. (If you are responding to a need in your immediate vicinity, you are responding as an individual and not as a CERT member.)
- Stay close to your buddy – in reach or in sight. Be able to get to your buddy if needed.
- Notify your Team Leader or supervisor if you are unable or unwilling to manage a task because it exceeds your physical or psychological capabilities.
- Follow MC-CERT training faithfully with regard to procedures and protocols.

Standards of Integration

MC-CERT expects all members to perform as follows:

- Defer to Fire, Rescue, Police, or other official response personnel on the scene, regardless of jurisdiction, and support as requested, while notifying your CERT chain of command.

Disciplinary Action

When MC-CERT is deployed, its Team Leaders have authority to suspend or deactivate volunteers or trainees for behavior contrary to the Code of Conduct.

MC-CERT's Executive Committee has the authority to investigate a report of behavior contrary to this Code of Conduct and to determine whether to elevate the issue to the

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—Annex A: Code of Conduct—
Effective from January 1, 2013

appropriate authority within the Montgomery County Division of Fire Rescue Services. Any action against an MC-CERT member on account of a violation of this Code must be brought to the MC-CERT President and the Program Manager. Such actions may be referred to the Montgomery County Division of Fire Rescue Services for action within under the Montgomery County Fire And Rescue Policy 06-08 Section 5.

If an individual's membership in MC-CERT is revoked, that individual must return all MC-CERT-issued equipment and supplies, as well as the MC-CERT ID to the MC-CERT Program Manager.

Redress

All members of MC-CERT are expected to conduct their CERT-related (and other) activities in a civil and reasonable manner. Any grievances with other MC-CERT members should be handled at the most proximate level possible, with consideration and tact.

Any complaint against another member of MC-CERT owing to their activities within MC-CERT, not resolvable at that level, should be raised first to your supervisor (if you are in a deployed state) or to the designated Team Leader for that activity, who will raise the complaint to the President and the Program Manager. Ultimately, MC-CERT is governed by the Montgomery County Division of Fire Rescue Services the Montgomery County Fire And Rescue Policy 06-08 issued on 09/15/2008.

CERTIFICATION I have read this Code of Conduct, know what is expected in MC-CERT, and agree to abide by the terms herein.

This Code of Conduct (and its effective date) was distributed to all MC-CERT members through multiple communication means in November 2012. Additionally, it has been communicated at both the monthly MC-CERT Steering Committee meeting and the monthly MC-CERT General Meeting. These communications are in lieu of signatures. This Code of Conduct will be communicated to future CERT Basic trainees.

PRINTED NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE

Montgomery County (Maryland) Community Emergency Response Team
—Annex B: Operations—
Effective from January 1, 2013

Annex B: Operations

- Communications
- Field Operations Guide

Montgomery County (Maryland) Community Emergency Response Team
—Annex C: Activities for Continuing Training & Service Requirements—
Effective from January 1, 2013

Annex C: Activities for Continuing Training and Service Requirements

**Montgomery County (Maryland) Community Emergency Response Team
—Annex D: On-Call Service—
Effective from January 1, 2013**

Annex D: On-Call Service

Annex E: Organizational Charts

—Annex F: Social Media Usage Policy— Effective from June 2, 2014

Annex F: Social Media Usage Policy

The Montgomery County (MD) Community Emergency Response Team (MC-CERT) has created official social media accounts for Twitter (@MontCoCert), on Facebook (Montgomery County CERT), and Pinterest (MontCoCert). These are the only official accounts. Members are advised of the following for both official social media accounts as well as their own personal accounts.

- No member may create a new official or unofficial MC-CERT account on any social media site without permission from the Board.
- MC-CERT members responsible for maintaining official MC-CERT accounts must complete FEMA course IS-42 “Social Media in Emergency Management.” MC-CERT Social Media Coordinator is responsible for ensuring training completion prior to providing login credentials.
- When posting on behalf of MC-CERT on an official MC-CERT account, a professional voice in their demeanor and language should be maintained. Humor may be used provided it is appropriate to the subject and situation.
- When members with access to the social media accounts change or update, MC-CERT Social Media Coordinator is responsible for changing all passwords individuals had access to. Should, MC-CERT Social Media Coordinator change, MC-CERT president will be so responsible.
- Members posting on official accounts may not use the accounts to express political/ideological opinions; religious statements; offensive, profane, or abusive materials; or personally-identifiable information.
- During actual MC-CERT deployments, no photos of the incident or victims may be used on the official or personal social media accounts without the permission of the MC-CERT President or Program Manager.
- On personal accounts, members should exercise due caution when stating affiliation with MC-CERT to avoid appearing as an unofficial account, especially when other personal social media content may violate above terms. Members should remember to abide by the full MC-CERT Code of Conduct in both online and offline representations.