



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

Effective from June 1, 2024

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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 Note: Changed to Appendix C - 10/20/2020 GWA
December 2018	Major Revision First Draft
October 2020	Edit by Program Manager
10/20/2020	Edits by President (G. Adcock)
11/3/2020	Edit – G. Adcock; changed 10 hours “quarterly” to “annually” (Sections 5.3.3, 5.4, 8.4, and Appendix B, section o).
07/22/2021	Update to Section 5.3.2 (later moved to Section 5.1) – Category Membership (waiver for CERT Basic for MCFRS personnel). Added the CERT PM authorized also.
06/01/2024	Substantive updates to membership categories, requirements for voting and instructors, and deployment (Sections 5, 7, 8, 13, 14, and Appendix A). Additional minor changes throughout other sections of the document.

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1. Regarding this Document

1.1 Document Purpose

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

1.2 Amendments to this Document

This document may be amended from time to time through a majority vote of the MC-CERT Executive Committee (see Section 6.1).

2. MC-CERT Background

MC-CERT is part of the national CERT program, one of the family of programs of “Citizen Corps,” a program of the US Department of Homeland Security.

Due to Montgomery County’s recognition of the need for a volunteer community emergency response auxiliary to assist in the event of emergency or pending emergency, the MC-CERT program was founded in 2003 and operates under the Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Service (MCFRS).

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 MC-CERT members receive will help them to assist effectively in other smaller scale mishaps that are within the scope of everyday events.

MC-CERT training and program maintenance is directed by MCFRS. Additional training may be organized and conducted by MC-CERT or by other recognized and appropriate instructors and organizations as appropriate to fulfill the mission of the organization.

3. MC-CERT Mission

“The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program educates volunteers about disaster preparedness for the hazards that may occur where they live. CERT trains volunteers in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. The CERT program offers a consistent, nationwide approach to volunteer training and organization that professional responders can rely on during disaster situations, allowing them to focus on more complex tasks.” – FEMA website¹

¹ <http://www.ready.gov/community-emergency-response-team>

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The mission of MC-CERT is to serve the people of Montgomery County, Maryland through a two-fold approach:

- a) Education: To provide those residing, working, or congregating in the County with the necessary tools to prepare themselves, their families, and their neighborhood for emergencies.
- b) Support: To serve the community by assuming responsibility for designated tasks during both planned events and unplanned emergency situations, with a goal of maximizing the availability of First Responders to do the tasks for which they were trained.

4. Concept of Operations

All participation by MC-CERT members in service of MC-CERT's two-fold mission of education and support is voluntary. Requirements for participating in operations often differ based on the degree of physical demand, the types of skills needed, and the primary focus of the particular operation (see Section 13.1); however, all operations follow the same general principles of incident command, scope of training, and primacy of members' personal safety described throughout this document.

The MC-CERT program emphasizes a dual approach in emergencies:

- Limited Self-Activation: Neighbor helping neighbor as private citizens, not as CERT members, using 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.

MC-CERT members are deployable for numerous types of situations including:

- training the public in emergency preparedness
- first aid and communications support for special community events
- MCFRS evacuations
- post-fire escort missions to assist residents in retrieving personal property
- missing person searches
- neighborhood damage assessment

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- donation management in County operated emergency shelters

MC-CERT members may be deployed for activities not in the above list at the discretion of the MC-CERT Program Manager. These may include local, statewide, or out-of-state operations.

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.

https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/frs-ql/resources/files/swsj/policyprocedures/admin/mcfrsadmin06-08_fire_corps.pdf

MC-CERT members are regulated by the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Commission Code of Ethics and On-Duty Personal Conduct, No. 22-00 AM Effective 7/9/ 2002. See also Annex A: MC-CERT Code of Conduct

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/frs-ql/resources/files/swsj/policyprocedures/admin/frcadmin22-00AM.pdf>

The MCFRS Fire Chief’s General Order 13-08 pertaining to Special Events also applies.

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/frs-ql/Resources/Files/swsj/fcgo/2013/2013-08a-ems-events.pdf>

MC-CERT may be deployed by MCFRS or upon the direction of the MCFRS Fire Chief or their designee to assist in performing tasks to support emergency response, within the scope of their training, MCFRS guidelines, 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 another County authority specified by MCFRS, certain protections may apply, including Workers’ Compensation and Good Samaritan Laws.

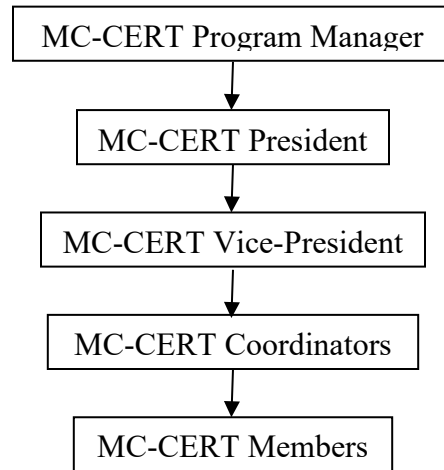
4.3 MC-CERT Organization

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 another deploying agency.

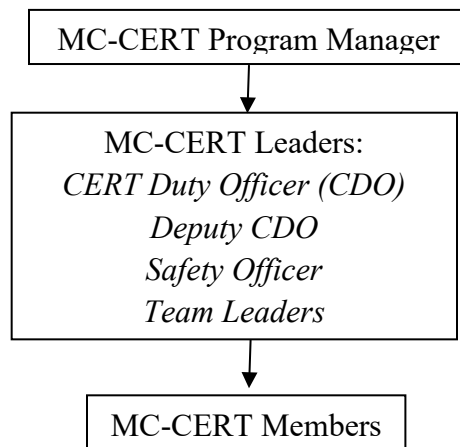
4.4 Chain of Command

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

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



While the MC-CERT President may, in consultation with the MC-CERT Program Manager, appoint or relieve MC-CERT Team Leaders, during activation the MC-CERT Team Leader will “outrank” any MC-CERT member or officer (except the MC-CERT Program Manager and CDO/DCDO) regardless of position. See also Sections 5.5 and 13.

5. Membership

5.1 General Membership Requirements

To qualify for membership in MC-CERT, a prospective member must meet all the following requirements:

- Live, work, or congregate in Montgomery County.
- Be at least 18 years of age.
- Either (a) attend the Montgomery County-specific CERT Basic training and receive a

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Certificate of Course Completion (see Sections 8.1 and 8.2) or (b) have previously completed the MC-CERT Teen CERT Program (see Section 5.3) and then turned age 18.

- Exception: A new MC-CERT member, who is a current or former member of the MCFRS, may receive authorization from the Division Chief, Volunteer Services Division, or the MC-CERT Program Manager, to become an MC-CERT member without completing the MC-CERT Basic training classes based on their prior experience in MCFRS.
- Sign a Release and Indemnification Agreement in the form approved by MC-CERT and abide by its requirements (which include the requirements contained in the MC-CERT Code of Conduct). 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.

Additional membership requirements may apply depending upon the Category of Membership. See Section 5.2 for additional information.

5.2 Categories of Membership

There are two basic categories of MC-CERT membership for adults:

5.2.1 Category 1: CERT Trained Individuals

Comprised of people who take MC-CERT Basic training 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 being a part of any MC-CERT-related community service projects or participating in any other MC-CERT operations. Category 1 members benefit the community by having additional skills to respond should an emergency arise and to help their communities be better prepared (including giving readiness trainings, alerting the community of upcoming weather events, giving preparedness tips, etc.).

Category 1 members must meet the requirements listed in Section 5.1. They are also encouraged to sign up for Alert Montgomery. Category 1 members are not entitled to run for office or to vote in annual elections of MC-CERT. They are not eligible to participate in any MC-CERT operations. The MC-CERT organization may provide basic equipment (see Section 14) for use during these members' Basic training at the discretion of the MC-CERT Program Manager or President; however, there is no obligation to do so.

Category 1 members must maintain their own training records in the event they wish to convert to Category 2 membership. They are also requested to maintain accurate and up-to-date contact information with MC-CERT.

5.2.2 Category 2: Participation Members

Comprised of people who wish to participate in non-emergency MC-CERT events and/or responding to actual emergencies. They are encouraged to take part frequently in community service, training, table events, and field events.

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Category 2 Participation Members must:

- Meet the requirements listed in Section 5.1,
- Maintain current contact information in CERVIS (the MC-CERT volunteer management database application),
- Be entered into PIMS (the MCFRS Personnel Information Management System),
- Be fingerprinted,
- Pass a standard MCFRS background check,
- Have applied for a County MCFRS ID card,
- Sign the MC-CERT Code of Conduct (see Annex A),
- Complete required MCFRS local fire rescue department (LFRD) training relative to MC-CERT (see Appendix D), including any periodic refresher training as directed,
- Obtain recertification in CPR/AED training (see Section 8.2) at least every two years, and
- Complete MC-CERT radio training if required (see next paragraph).

MC-CERT radio training consists of basic training on the use of MC-CERT issued 800 MHz radios (or any other models that MC-CERT may issue) and good communication practices. The radio training is required to participate in emergency operations, to serve on CERT-700 (see Section 5.4), or to act as a duty officer for any operations (see Section 5.5). It is also required to participate in planned events or other non-emergency operations, unless the member is paired for that event with another Category 2 Participation Member who has taken the radio training or the duty officer for that event specifically agrees otherwise.

Category 2 Participation Members are also strongly encouraged to sign up for Alert Montgomery and to notify the MC-CERT President or Program Manager about any extended absences from the County.

Category 2 Participation Members are entitled to vote in annual elections and run for elected office of MC-CERT, provided they meet the eligibility requirements listed in Sections 7.2 and 7.3 in addition to the requirements of this Section.

The MC-CERT organization may provide equipment, supplies and/or clothing (see Section 14 and Appendix A) to Category 2 Participation Members for their own use during training and/or operations at the discretion of the MC-CERT Program Manager or President; however, there is no obligation to do so.

5.3 Teen CERT

Individuals between the ages of 14 and 18 may be included in the MC-CERT Teen CERT program. Teen CERT Basic training follows the FEMA Teen CERT national curriculum and may be conducted in association with MCFRS partners approved by the MC-CERT Program Manager (e.g., GWGVFD Junior Fire Brigade Program) and Montgomery County Public Schools. Teen CERT members are excused from the requirement of completing the County-

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specific CERT Basic training when they have completed the Teen CERT Basic training. The Teen CERT Basic Training and Program are coordinated by the Teen CERT Team Leader, under the direction of the MC-CERT Training Coordinator.

Teen CERT members may take part only in authorized activities of MC-CERT upon successful completion of the FEMA Teen CERT Basic training program.

As a condition of membership and prior to the beginning of training in MC-CERT as a Teen CERT, each Teen CERT student must sign and submit a Parental Consent Form and an Indemnification Form signed by their parent or guardian, and must sign and submit a copy of the MC-CERT Code of Conduct (Annex A). Each Teen CERT student must comply with the MC-CERT Uniform Apparel Policy (Appendix A) and the MC-CERT Social Media Usage Policy (Appendix C). Each student must successfully complete IS700 and IS100, and follow the directions of the assigned Team Leader under the Incident Command System when involved in public activities.

When a graduate of a Teen CERT Basic training program, conducted by MC-CERT, attains the age of 18, that individual may become an adult member of MC-CERT. In doing so, that individual is required to complete the requirements for the appropriate category of MC-CERT membership (see Sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2) desired.

Teen CERT members are not entitled to vote or run for any MC-CERT elected office. Any requirements for maintaining current membership within the Montgomery County Teen CERT program will be defined by the MC-CERT Program Manager and Teen CERT Team Leader. Once a Teen CERT turns 16 years old, their MC-CERT service will be eligible for tracking in the County's PIMS system. Tracking of those members aged 14 to 16 will be the responsibility of the Teen CERT Team Leader, with periodic reports to the MC-CERT Program Manager as requested.

5.4 CERT-700 Roles

CERT-700 is an MCFRS asset intended for use as a support unit for MC-CERT emergency response and planned events. It may also be used as an outreach unit for MC-CERT events when appropriate.

There are three different roles that can be served on CERT-700:

- The Operator, who drives it and is responsible for its use and maintenance in accordance with MCFRS requirements and MC-CERT policies,
- The Navigator, who assists the Operator in discharging their responsibilities, and
- An optional third-seat Crew, who (when present) is available to assist the others as needed.

Any operation of CERT-700 will require both an Operator and a Navigator, unless the MC-

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CERT Program Manager specifically approves otherwise.

To be qualified to serve on CERT-700, MC-CERT members must meet the following criteria for the applicable role:

1. Criteria to serve as Crew:
 - a. Be a Category 2 Participation Member and continue to meet the requirements for that category,
 - b. Complete the required MC-CERT radio training as described in Section 5.2.2, and
 - c. Notify the Go-Team Operations Coordinator or their designee of the member's interest in serving on CERT-700, initially as Crew.
2. Criteria to serve as Navigator:
 - a. Meet the criteria to serve as Crew,
 - b. Complete the Mobile Module in the MCFRS Mobile Data Computer (MDC) training course,
 - c. Ride as Crew on several deployments and/or practice runs of CERT-700 to observe the role of Navigator and the general operation of the unit,
 - d. Be nominated for the Navigator role by the Go-Team Operations Coordinator or their designee,
 - e. Receive on-the-job training as Navigator under the supervision of an experienced Navigator, and
 - f. Be approved for the Navigator role by the MC-CERT President and Program Manager.
3. Criteria to serve as Operator:
 - a. Meet the criteria to serve as Navigator,
 - b. Be nominated for the Operator role by the Go-Team Operations Coordinator or their designee,
 - c. Acknowledge the expectation that the member will serve as Operator for a minimum of two deployments in each calendar year, unless the Go-Team Operations Coordinator or their designee approves otherwise,
 - d. Provide a current clean driving record from the Motor Vehicle Administration,
 - e. Be approved for the Operator role by the MC-CERT President and Program Manager (subject to satisfactory completion of the RVOC or EVOC referred to below), and
 - f. Complete the MCFRS Routine Vehicle Operations Course (RVOC) or the MCFRS Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC).

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The Go-Team Operations Coordinator or their designee as approved by the MC-CERT Program Manager shall serve as the logistics and scheduling officer for CERT-700. CERT-700 will be stored and secured at a location determined by the MC-CERT Program Manager and the MCFRS Chief, Division of Volunteer Services.

5.5 CERT Duty Officer (CDO)

The CDO is an experienced MC-CERT member with additional training to lead and manage MC-CERT operations (whether emergency response or planned events). The CDO for a particular operation is responsible for ensuring that the MC-CERT members involved in that operation adhere to FEMA guidelines and MCFRS policies regarding the organization, and delivery of services by MC-CERT as well as the MC-CERT operations procedures outlined in Section 13.

To be qualified to serve as a CDO, MC-CERT members must meet the following criteria:

- a. Be a Category 2 Participation Member and continue to meet the requirements for that category,
- b. Complete the required MC-CERT radio training as described in Section 5.2.2,
- c. Be nominated for CDO status by the relevant Operations Coordinator or their designee,
- d. Act as Deputy CDO on a relevant type of MC-CERT operation,
- e. Act as CDO on a relevant type of MC-CERT operation under the supervision of a current CDO, and
- f. Be approved for the CDO role by the MC-CERT Program Manager and President.

6. Governance

MC-CERT is governed by the following Officers and structures:

6.1 Executive Committee

The MC-CERT Executive Committee is comprised of the four MC-CERT elected officers (see Section 6.3) and a representative of MCFRS who is authorized to commit resources in support of MC-CERT (generally the MC-CERT Program Manager – see Section 6.2). They are the highest decision-making authority for all day-to-day operations of the group, except in those areas reserved for the MC-CERT Program Manager.

6.2 MC-CERT Program Manager

The MC-CERT Program Manager is a civilian employee of MCFRS and reports to the Chief, Division of Volunteer Services. The MC-CERT Program Manager is the sole liaison officer

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between the volunteer MC-CERT organization and MCFRS. The MC-CERT Program Manager is considered “CERT Command” for Integrated Emergency Command Structure (IECS) purposes. The MC-CERT Program Manager is the sole authority in MC-CERT for budget or grant discussions with the County, and is the default PIO for MC-CERT.

6.3 Elected Officers

There are four elected Officers, President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer, each elected for a term of one year (see Section 7). If an elected Officer cannot fulfill a term, the remaining MC-CERT Officers shall appoint a replacement to complete that Officer’s term. Candidates for elective positions must be current Category 2 Participation Members meeting the requirements of Section 7.2.

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 Category 2 Participation Members who are interested in assuming ongoing responsibilities within the MC-CERT program are also invited to join the Steering Committee.

6.5 Appointed Coordinators

Coordinators have responsibility for specific areas of MC-CERT operations, and may lead other MC-CERT members in carrying out the necessary activities of MC-CERT. To be appointed to a coordinator position, a candidate must be a Category 2 Participation Member meeting the same requirements as set forth in Section 7.2 below for eligibility to run for office. Coordinators shall be appointed through the majority vote of the Steering Committee at any monthly meeting of the Steering Committee.

MC-CERT Coordinators are typically needed for the following roles:

- Operations:
 - Outreach Operations
 - Go-Team Operations
- Dispatch
- Communications
- Virtual Emergency Response Team (VERT)
- Logistics
- Training
- Registrar
- Human Resources (HR)
- Social Media
- Technology

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- Project-related appointments
- Others as needed...

7. Election of Officers

Elections for Officers are held annually for the four Officer positions during the April General Meeting. The term of office is one year, and individuals may serve an unlimited number of terms in a position provided they remain eligible and are re-elected to that position each year.

7.1 Responsibilities of Elected Officers

7.1.1 President

- Provide overall guidance for all MC-CERT training and operations
- Be accountable to the MC-CERT Program Manager for operational readiness
- Appoint qualified MC-CERT members for committee chairs, team leaders (for operations), 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)

7.1.2 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 required

7.1.3 Secretary

- Prepare and publish agendas, and prepare and maintain minutes, for General and Steering Committee Meetings
- With the HR Coordinator, maintain and provide current Category 2 membership roster, information, and email list
- With the Training Coordinator, ensure that records of training and experience of members are maintained
- Provide capability for maintaining accountability for MC-CERT personnel during operations and tracking volunteer hours
- With the Operations Coordinators, maintain records of deployment (dates and activities) of all MC-CERT members
- With the Technology Coordinator, monitor website feedback and resolve or forward emails to the appropriate person to handle questions and issues raised

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7.1.4 Treasurer

- Track expenditures and submit expense requests to the MC-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 MC-CERT Program Manager, coordinate preparation and writing of materials for grant proposals

7.2 Eligibility to Run for Office

Candidates for elected office shall have met the same requirements as are set forth in Section 7.3 for eligibility to vote.

7.3 Eligibility to Vote

Voters must be Category 2 Participation Members who have:

- Met the requirements of Sections 5.1 and 5.2.2 for at least 6 months as of the first day of the month in which the election is to take place (including CPR/AED recertification within two years prior to that day); and
- Participated in at least 10 hours of MC-CERT activities during the 12 months preceding the first day of the month in which the election is to take place.

Activities that are acceptable for this 10-hour annual service requirement may include participation in training, exercises, Go-Team Operations, Outreach Operations, meeting attendance, subcommittee activities, and other approved activities. A non-exhaustive list is included in Appendix B to illustrate the types of activities that qualify.

The 10-hour annual service requirement may be modified in the event of special circumstances as agreed upon by the MC-CERT Program Manager and President.

7.4 Nomination Process

Nominations must be received and publicized two weeks before the meeting in which the election is to take place. No nominations will be received on the day of the election. In the event no nominations for an office are received before the deadline, the MC-CERT Program Manager may choose to appoint a qualified MC-CERT member to the position.

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

Candidates are strongly requested to be present at the meeting in which the election is to take

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place.

7.5 Voting Process

Elections will be held annually, during the regularly scheduled April General Meeting.

Votes shall be cast via secret ballot at the designated General Meeting.

The MC-CERT Executive Committee may, at its discretion, authorize additional methods of early voting for a given election. These may include voting via email, an online data collection instrument, proxy voting, etc. Such additional voting methods must be announced to the membership at least two weeks prior to the date of the election.

Announcing the results occurs at the conclusion of the April General Meeting.

7.6 Transition to Newly Elected Officers

Transition to the newly 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 National CERT Training Elements

The national training standard for CERT Basic courses, as developed by FEMA, consists of:

- Disaster preparedness
- MC-CERT concept of operations
- Simple fire suppression
- Disaster medical operations
- Damage assessment
- Light search and rescue
- Disaster psychology
- Team organization

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- Terrorism awareness
- The National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS).

The curriculum includes skills-development exercises.

8.2 Montgomery County-Specific Training Elements

In addition to all elements from the national standard, the MC-CERT Basic training program also includes:

- Certification in adult Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation and Automated External Defibrillator (CPR/AED) training from an accredited institution approved by the MC-CERT Executive Committee for this purpose
- Clue awareness (for missing persons searches)
- Preparedness for households with animals
- Montgomery County-specific additional damage assessment training

8.3 MC-CERT Instructors

To be qualified to serve as an MC-CERT Instructor for MC-CERT training courses, MC-CERT members must meet the following criteria:

- Be a Category 2 Participation Member,
- Demonstrate an interest and basic ability by serving as an assistant for an experienced MC-CERT Instructor during MC-CERT Basic or other relevant training course,
- With the consent of the MC-CERT Program Manager, take and successfully complete the FEMA CERT Train-the-Trainer course,
- Under the supervision of an experienced MC-CERT Instructor, take the lead on several different segments of CERT Basic selected for this purpose by the Training Coordinator or their designee, and
- Be approved for the MC-CERT Instructor role by the Training Coordinator or their designee.

Once approved, MC-CERT Instructors must stay up-to-date on curriculum changes and technology requirements and attend any all-instructor meetings or training sessions, as well as continue to meet the requirements to be a Category 2 Participation Member. The steps required to become a CPR instructor may differ, as determined by the Training Coordinator, the MC-CERT Executive Committee, and/or the relevant certifying agencies.

MC-CERT Instructors serve as part of the Training Department and may be removed either (i)

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upon a determination to remove by both the Training Coordinator and the member of the MC-CERT Executive Committee who oversees Training or (ii) upon a determination to remove by the MC-CERT Program Manager.

8.4 Specialized Training

All Category 2 Participation Members are encouraged to continue expanding their emergency preparedness skills after they have completed the MC-CERT Basic course. A wide range of training opportunities are available in the Metropolitan Washington, DC area, all of which can teach new preparedness skills or reinforce existing skills. A partial list of training opportunities that are frequently offered may be found in Appendix B.

It is the responsibility of each member to receive the required hours of continuing training each year to meet the requirements of Section 7.3 and to provide appropriate proof (e.g., certificate, attendance roster, letter of appreciation, etc.) to the HR Coordinator. Depending on the information management systems available, members may be required to maintain their own training records in a web-based volunteer management system. Time spent participating in outside training may be applied to the annual 10-hour service requirement referred to in Section 7.3.

8.5 Training Records

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

External Training are those classes, seminars, or other instruction which are not conducted by MC-CERT instructors during an MC-CERT training event. 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.

9. Meetings

9.1 General Membership Meetings

General membership meetings are held the second Thursday of each month, from 1900 to 2100,

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generally both on Zoom and in the conference room of the Montgomery County Public Safety Headquarters (PSHQ), 100 Edison Park Drive, Gaithersburg, 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 Meetings

Steering Committee (SC) meetings are held the first Monday of each month, from 1900 to 2100, generally either on Zoom or in the conference room of PSHQ.

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, an agenda will be prepared for use during the meeting 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.

Additional MC-CERT members who are, or are in the process of becoming, Category 2 Participation Members and who are interested in assuming ongoing responsibilities within the MC-CERT program 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, 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
- Signed copies of the Release and Indemnification Form (see Section 5.1), the MC-CERT Code of Conduct (see Annex A), 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: As stated in Section 8.5, members may be required to maintain their own records of currency in MC-CERT's volunteer management system. Members in all categories are

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responsible for retaining copies of their own certificates and other proof of training and participation.

10.2 Financial Information (Treasurer)

- Expenditures
- Income, including donations and fundraising
- 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

- MC-CERT members are responsible for keeping themselves informed of the information contained in the following communications from MC-CERT: Routine announcements and notifications (e.g., upcoming events, training opportunities, and meetings)
- Mass communications to membership or emails to subsets of membership for specific uses

11.2 Communications during Operations

See Section 13 for information about communications during operations.

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

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MC-CERT 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.

12.2 Grants, Donations, and Fundraising

All fundraising must be approved by the MC-CERT 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 to the Treasurer. Should a grant or fundraiser be approved, a special coordinator may be appointed to support the Treasurer 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 or other activity is performed.

13. Procedures During Operations

13.1 Types of Operations

For management purposes, operations fall into two basic categories: Outreach Operations under the leadership of the Outreach Operations Coordinator, and Go-Team Operations under the leadership of the Go-Team Operations Coordinator.

An Outreach Operation is a planned event where team members can expect to be stationed at a CERT-designated area during much of the operation, with the primary focus being public engagement and education.

A Go-Team Operation is either a planned event or an emergency response where team members can expect to be in the field or on the move for much of the time, with the primary focus being public safety and disaster response assistance. The term “Go Team” refers to the group assembled by the relevant MC-CERT Coordinator, CDO, or Team Leader for a particular Go-Team Operation.

Many operations have elements of both, such as when the Go-Team Operations Coordinator or their designee deploys CERT-700 to support an Outreach Operation.

All Category 2 Participation Members who continue to meet the requirements for that category are eligible to volunteer for any operation for which space is available and for which they have the necessary physical capabilities and skills, as determined by the relevant MC-CERT Coordinator, CDO, or Team Leader. In many cases, the team for a given operation can benefit from a range of physical abilities and skills. Any member with an interest in a particular operation but uncertain about the requirements for it or their own eligibility is encouraged to contact the relevant MC-CERT Coordinator, CDO, or Team Leader to discuss it.

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13.2 During County Emergencies

- MC-CERT may 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 their designee. Activation notice will occur through the MC-CERT Dispatch Coordinator or their designee. At no time may any MC-CERT members acting as part of a team be activated or activate themselves without authorization. Should any members respond to an emergency without official activation, they are deemed to be responding as private citizens, not as MC-CERT members.
- MC-CERT members are required to respond with full equipment, supplies, and appropriate clothing for the weather conditions and the activity (see Section 14 and Appendix A). The team should be prepared for up to twelve-hour shifts.
- MC-CERT members will report to the staging area 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 or their designee 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.
- For the entire duration of an operation, 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. The PAR checks may be accomplished as part of the MC-CERT Incident Command (CDO/DCDO)
- Team Leaders and members will await further instructions after they have completed the assigned task(s) for further deployment or dismissal instructions from the MC-CERT Program Manager or their designee.
- Once dismissed from the activity, team members will report their safe arrival at home or at the designated off-duty area to the MC-CERT Dispatch Coordinator or their designee.

13.3 During Non-Emergencies

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

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to ensure accountability and safety to all members and the public that we are assisting.

13.4 Any Activation Outside of Montgomery County

- MC-CERT team(s) will be activated for out-of-county response only at the direction of the MC-CERT Program Manager.
- MC-CERT team members who are deployed outside of the 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).

14. Equipment and Supplies

- MC-CERT members are responsible for purchasing and replenishing their own equipment and supplies as necessary for their own safety, health, and comfort during training and/or operations (including, for Go-Team Operations, the relevant Minimum Equipment List detailed on the MC-CERT website, <https://montgomerycert.org/members/full-minimum-equipment-list/> or <https://montgomerycert.org/members/light-minimum-equipment-list/>). When MC-CERT members are providing first aid treatment to others during any MC-CERT operations, only team equipment and supplies provided for this purpose by MC-CERT or the event organizer are to be used (unless otherwise approved by the MC-CERT Program Manager).
- As provided in Section 5, MC-CERT may provide equipment and supplies to MC-CERT members for their own use during training and/or operations at the discretion of the MC-CERT Program Manager or President; however, there is no obligation to do so.
- Persons participating in the MC-CERT program understand and agree that any equipment and supplies provided to them for training and/or operations are the property of MC-CERT and are to be used only for MC-CERT training sessions and operations.
- 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 their designee.
- Members will report to the Logistics Coordinator or their designee immediately any damages to MC-CERT equipment or supplies.
- Equipment and supplies that are the property of MC-CERT as provided above as well as County-issued identification cards must be returned to MC-CERT when a member either resigns or is removed from MC-CERT membership.

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Appendix A: MC-CERT Uniform Apparel Policy

This policy sets forth expectations and standards concerning uniforms and appearance of Category 2 Participation Members.

Appropriate uniforms reinforce the appearance of professionalism, dedication, and competence associated with Montgomery County CERT. When deployed, whether for Go-Team Operations or Outreach Operations, uniformity of appearance also helps identify MC-CERT volunteers from other agency volunteers, spontaneous volunteers, and onlookers, aiding responding agencies and the general public in determining the status of MC-CERT personnel.

It is expected that MC-CERT members will be in uniform at any time that they are representing MC-CERT in any official capacity, including operations, trainings, and meetings. This is especially critical for situations where interaction with MCFRS and MCPD is highly likely.

MC-CERT personnel are expected to present a neat, clean, well-groomed appearance while conducting operations or while wearing MC-CERT uniform or branded gear in any public setting. MC-CERT volunteers are also expected to observe community standards of decorum appropriate to a public service agency at all times.

Members are responsible for purchasing and maintaining in good condition their own clothing in a manner consistent with this uniform policy. As a general rule, each Class 2 Participation Member is eligible to receive one MC-CERT-issued navy blue T-shirt, subject to availability in inventory. As provided in Section 5.2 above, MC-CERT may provide uniform pieces to Category 2 Participation Members at the discretion of the MC-CERT Program Manager or President; however there is no obligation to do so.²

Uniform Policy for Go-Team Operations and Outreach Operations

Prior to a specific event, the CERT Duty Officer (CDO) or Team Leader is responsible for providing, via email or other communication, Uniform of the Day information for that event. If there is any conflict between that communication and the information in this Appendix A, the event-specific information will take precedence.

² Class 2 Participation Members may also be given access, at times determined by the Executive Committee, to the MC-CERT on-line store for optional purchase of other MC-CERT-branded clothing items at the member's own expense.

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If the Uniform of the Day calls for an MC-CERT-issued uniform piece but the member has not yet been issued that piece and none are available to be issued to the member, the member may wear the alternative item for that piece described below.

The following guidelines are to be used for any Go-Team or Outreach Operations (unless the CDO or Team Leader for an event specifies otherwise for that event or accommodations are made as described under “General Notes” below):

Shirts:

- Preferred choice: Either (1) MC-CERT-issued short-sleeved gray collared shirt (if and when available for issuance) or (2) MC-CERT-issued navy blue T-shirt.
- Acceptable alternative: Same color and style as the preferred choice, without any writing or decoration of any kind. MC-CERT-issued burgundy shirts are also acceptable.
- Note: For warmth, a plain long-sleeved T-shirt in a matching color may be worn underneath.

Pants/Shorts:

- Preferred choice: Navy blue or black tactical-style pants or shorts, with a black belt and shirt tucked in.
- Acceptable alternative: Plain navy blue, black, or khaki slacks or knee-length shorts (no jeans), with a black belt and shirt tucked in.
- Note: The decision to wear pants vs. shorts is left to the member, taking into account the context and situation of the operation; however, most operational settings will require long pants.

Socks:

- Preferably black, especially if visible when wearing shorts.

Shoes/Boots:

- For Go-Team Operations: Boots or other heavy closed-toe shoes are required, preferably black in color (brown is acceptable).
- For Outreach Operations: Appropriate footwear. Open-toe shoes are not appropriate. Athletic shoes are fine for a table event. Work boots are always appropriate as well.

Vest:

- MC-CERT-issued high-visibility vest in **yellow** (not green).
- For Go-Team Operations: Should always be worn as the most exterior garment unless wearing the yellow high-visibility winter jacket.

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- For Outreach Operations: If one has been issued to you, bring it with you. You may not need to use it, but you should always have it available.
- Note: For members who have not been issued their own yellow high-visibility vest, CERT-700 usually carries several of them that may be borrowed for a given operation.

Hat (Optional):

- MC-CERT-issued dark blue CERT baseball cap with green or yellow embroidery or knit cap with CERT patch.
- Acceptable alternative: Plain dark blue baseball cap or knit cap.

Outerwear:

- Preferred choice: Yellow high-visibility winter jacket (MC-CERT-issued, if available).
- Acceptable alternative: Yellow high-visibility vest worn over whatever other weather-appropriate apparel you may opt to wear.

Montgomery County Identification:

- Your County ID must be visible on your upper body or otherwise with you and readily available for display at all times. If your ID has not yet been issued by the County, you may still participate in Go-Team Operations or Outreach Operations, but be proactive in telling the CDO or Team Leader that your ID issuance is pending.

General Notes:

- The uniform guidelines described above may be adjusted as appropriate by the CDO, Team Leader, or the relevant MC-CERT Coordinator to accommodate an individual member's situation.
- Apparel that uses variations on the CERT logo in non-approved colors is not allowed.
- It is acceptable to personalize your apparel to include your name if presented in a professional manner.

Uniform Policy for MC-CERT Instructors

The above guidelines also apply to MC-CERT Instructors during training activities. While instructing, instructors may also wear MC-CERT-issued shirts that identify them as “Instructors”, if available. Footwear should be appropriate to the training scenarios planned.

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Off-Duty Uniform Policy

Wearing of MC-CERT uniform apparel in public can attract positive attention to the organization, and attract new members who otherwise might not have heard of us. It can also potentially have the opposite effect, depending upon the behavior and activity of the member! The same is true for wearing in public any other apparel containing any CERT logo or other branding.

MC-CERT members are permitted and encouraged to wear in public uniform shirts and hats of any type or any non-uniform CERT-branded apparel, provided that the member's behavior reflects positively upon the organization as a whole and does not conflict with the MC-CERT Code of Conduct.

Members who choose to wear uniform or other CERT-branded apparel while off-duty should always ensure that it remains clean and in good repair.

Because MC-CERT high-visibility vests and jackets project an aura of authority, which may be inappropriate in certain situations, they may not be worn while off duty.

Uniform Policy for Teen CERT Members

Teen CERT members are not to wear any CERT-branded or issued apparel at any time except when participating in an authorized activity of MC-CERT (in which case the uniform policies described above will apply). This prohibition includes no wearing of CERT-branded or issued apparel at school unless prior approval is obtained from MC-CERT leadership or the Teen CERT Team Leader.

Violations of the Uniform Policy

Violations of the policy set forth in this Appendix A will be evaluated by MC-CERT leadership and penalties imposed as appropriate, ranging from being asked to depart from an activity, suspended from Category 2 Participation Membership, or being removed from the MC-CERT organization.

The Executive Committee is authorized to impose penalties for any violations. For a violation occurring during a particular activity, the senior on-site MC-CERT official is also authorized to impose immediate penalties in the form of removing the offending member from that activity. The MC-CERT Program Manager will review all penalties imposed and render an appropriate judgment with respect to additional or ongoing sanctions.

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Appendix B: Sample Qualifying Activities to Meet Annual Service Requirement

As provided in Sections 6.5, 7.2, and 7.3, Category 2 Participation Members are required to perform a minimum of 10 hours of service per calendar year to be eligible to hold elective office, serve as a Coordinator, or vote. This list of qualifying activities is non-exhaustive, but will serve to illustrate the type of activities which qualify:

- a) Attendance at monthly MC-CERT General and/or Steering Committee meetings
- b) Attendance at planned Committee meetings for the benefit of the organization
- c) Participation as an instructor or assistant at the MC-CERT Basic, Teen CERT, or other MC-CERT training sessions
- d) Participation in Go-Team Operations
- e) Participation in Outreach Operations
- f) MC-CERT radio trainings or refreshers
- g) VERT events
- h) First aid and CPR/AED certification (and re-certification) courses, either offered through MC-CERT or an approved third-party trainer
- i) Narcan administration training, through Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services or an approved outside trainer
- j) Mental Health First Aid or Psychological First Aid training
- k) Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Citizens Corps Training
- l) Any activity listed on CERVIS as being open to member registration
- m) FEMA “Train the Trainer” and “CERT Program Manager” courses
- n) Participation, as a volunteer or attendee, at the annual CERT Con conference
- o) Online Independent Study courses through FEMA Emergency Management Institute (<https://training.fema.gov/is/>), which are offered free of charge to all interested parties and contain valuable information on a wide variety of emergency response related topics. A few recommended courses are listed below, but MC-CERT members are encouraged to complete any courses that are of interest.

EXAMPLES OF AVAILABLE FEMA COURSES

Course ID	FEMA Course Name
IS-10.a	Animals in Disasters: Awareness and Preparedness

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IS-11.a	Animals in Disasters: Community Planning
IS-42.a	Social Media in Emergency Management ³
IS-120.c	An Introduction to Exercises ⁴
IS-130.a	How to be an Exercise Evaluator ⁶
IS-366.a	Planning for the Needs of Children in Disasters
IS-368.a	Including People With Disabilities in Disaster Operations
IS-505	Concepts of Religious Literacy for Emergency Management
IS-559	Local Damage Assessment
IS-815	ABCs of Temporary Emergency Power
IS-907	Active Shooter: What You Can Do

³ IS-42 is strongly recommended for individuals interested in participating in VERT events.

⁴ IS-120 and IS-130 may be of particular interest for those individuals interested in becoming a CDO or an MC-CERT instructor

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Appendix C: Social Media Usage Policy

MC-CERT has created official social media accounts for “X” (@MontCoCert), 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 Executive Committee.
- 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, posters must maintain a professional voice in their demeanor and language. 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, the MC-CERT Social Media Coordinator is responsible for changing all passwords individuals had access to. Should the MC-CERT Social Media Coordinator change, the MC-CERT President will be responsible for ensuring the passwords change.
- 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 operations, 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 official account, especially when other personal social media content may violate the above terms. Members should remember to abide by the full MC-CERT Code of Conduct in both online and offline representations.

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Appendix D: Required Training for Category 2 Participation Members

- I. All Category 2 Participation Members must complete the required training as listed in Sections 5.1 and 5.2.2.

- II. All Category 2 Participation Members must abide by MCFRS policy, regulation and general order pertaining to:
 - MCFRS Fire Corps Policy
 - MCFRS Regulation for Code of Ethics and On-Duty Personal Conduct
 - MCFRS Fire Chief’s General Order regarding participation in Special Events, Planning, and Personnel Performing at Private EMS Functions

Below are links to the above listed MCFRS material, which every Category 2 Participation Member must review and abide by:

- A. Montgomery County Fire Corps -
https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/frs-ql/resources/files/swsj/policyprocedures/admin/mcfrsadmin06-08_fire_corps.pdf

- B. Code of Ethics and On-Duty Personal Conduct -
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/frs-ql/resources/files/swsj/policyprocedures/admin/frcadmin22-00AM.pdf>

- C. MCFRS Special Events, Planning, and Personnel Performing at Private EMS Functions -
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/frs-ql/Resources/Files/swsj/fcgo/2013/2013-08a-ems-events.pdf>

III. Required MCFRS EEO, Diversity, and HIPAA Training

All Category 2 Participation Members must also complete the required MCFRS EEO, Diversity, and HIPAA required training. Select the below links to register/sign in to each course.

How to Log into MCFRS Tech Training:

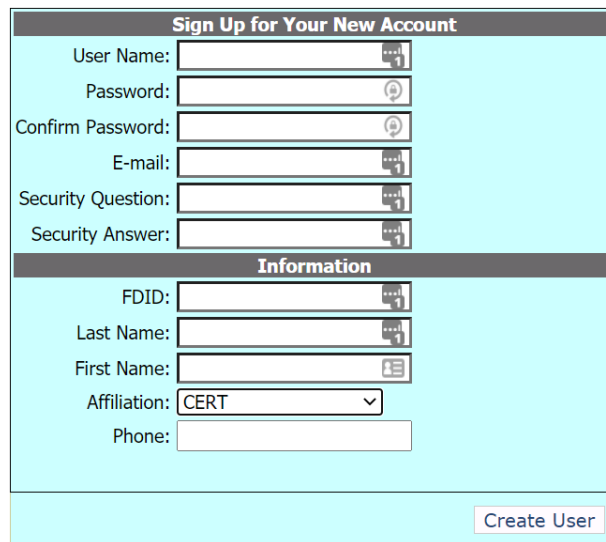
- 1. Sign into the website at <https://www.mcfrsit.com/>

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2. Anyone who does not have an account should click the yellow box (Register) and fill out the account registration form.



3. Note: Do not proceed with creating an account unless you have received your MCFRS Fire ID. If you have a County-issued ID card, you can look on the back of it to see your 6-digit fire department ID (FDID). Do not just guess as to what it should be. The convention is your last name initial, first name initial, then the last 4 numbers of your social security number.
4. If you have ever taken a tech class within MCFRS, you probably already have an account (either created for you or by you). Please do not create a new account if you already have one.
5. Here's a screenshot of the registration. Make sure you select CERT in the affiliation box.



6. If you do not have an ID card or need to get a FDID, please contact hr@montgomerycert.org for further instructions.

After your account is created and logged in successfully, click the following links to take the 4 required training classes:

- A. EEO and the Law:

<https://www.mcfrsit.com/e-learning/eo/default.aspx>

- B. Cultural Diversity:

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<https://www.mcfrsit.com/e-learning/diversity/default.aspx>

C. HIPAA:

<http://www.mcfrsit.com/trackingHIPAA/>

D. EEO Refresher

<http://www.mcfrsit.com/TrackingEEO/Students/default.aspx>

Annex A. MC-CERT 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 June 1, 2024.

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 June 1, 2024, 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, 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 if requested, wear CERT ID card in a visible location. If required, carry appropriate credentials.
- Be free of intoxicants or controlled dangerous substances while on duty or in CERT/MC-CERT uniform.
- Show respect to everyone and act professionally, appropriately, and responsibly.

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- Be law-abiding and cooperate with law enforcement personnel.
- Do not bring weapons to any MC-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.
- When off-duty, wear MC-CERT uniform attire only in accordance with Appendix A: MC-CERT Uniform Apparel Policy regarding Off-Duty Uniform Policy.
- Do not use the MC-CERT name, logo, or ‘brand’ for any outside activity or fundraising effort without the express written permission of the MC-CERT Program Manager.
- Comply with the MC-CERT Social Media Usage Policy.

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 System (ICS) structure, and be guided by the Incident Action Plan (IAP) for the activity in question.
- 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 an MC-CERT member.)
- Stay close to your partner – in reach or in sight. Be able to get to your partner quickly 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 regarding procedures and protocols.

Standards of Integration

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MC-CERT expects all members to defer to Fire, Rescue, Police, or other official response personnel on the scene, regardless of jurisdiction, and support as requested, while notifying your MC-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 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 or 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, no matter the category, 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 Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Policy 06-08 issued on 09/15/2008.

CERTIFICATION I have read this Code of Conduct and reviewed and understand the material listed in Appendix D (Required Training for Category 2 Participation Members) and know what is expected of me as a member of MC-CERT, and agree to abide by the terms herein.

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PRINTED NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE

This Certification must be signed and provided to the MC-CERT Human Resources/Registrar Coordinator. Electronic signatures may be accepted. Signed Certifications may be sent via email or provided in printed/signed copy. Please use the hr@montgomerycert.org address for emailing Certifications.