



Charleston County Emergency Management Department  
8500 Palmetto Commerce Parkway  
North Charleston, SC 29456

Title Community Emergency Response Team Policy Letter	Publication Date 12/13/2023
Approved By B. Webster	Date Approved 12/13/2023

**Policy:** The Charleston County Emergency Management Department (CCEMD) is the designated responsible agency for the Charleston County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program. In accordance with the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) CERT guidelines and the CCEMD Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), and Standard Operating Guide (SOG). The CCEMD will maintain and conduct a county level CERT training program primarily geared towards the training of Charleston County residents.

**Purpose:** To describe responsibilities and standards for the Charleston County CERT program that will set the course for an effective program which will instill the CERT volunteer with the necessary confidence in their learned skills to believe that “Neighborhood preparedness will enhance the ability of individuals and communities to reduce their emergency needs and to manage their existing resources until professional assistance becomes available” (FEMA, 2019, p. 2).

**Scope:** Concerns the facilitation of the Charleston County CERT Program.

**Responsibilities:**

The CCEMD shall conduct beginner and advanced CERT training for Charleston County residents, and recertify experienced residents that have completed a Charleston County CERT training more than 5 years ago. The CCEMD shall provide CERT volunteers with CERT materials and course completion documentation. The CCEMD will generally not conduct training or exercises for non-residents of Charleston County, replenish expended CERT supplies, reproduction of damaged or lost CERT qualification documents, recertification of expired CERT training documents or badging identification for individuals, groups, or private business organizations which did not originate from the Charleston County CERT Program. Credentialing is at the discretion of the CERT Coordinator and the CCEMD Leadership.

**Process:**

Individuals interested in the CERT program should fill out an interest form on the CCEMD website. Pending availability, the CCEMD will conduct on-site or off-site CERT classes for organized community groups, neighborhoods, apartment complexes, etc. with 20 or more registered attendees. CCEMD will provide basic class materials and equipment (funding dependent). Groups not meeting the above minimum requirement are still encouraged to express interest. They will be added to an update list and will be advised in the case opportunities are available.

**Credentialing and Recertification:**

CCEMD maintains a credentialing system, and at their discretion will issue credentials to bona fide members who have completed a class conducted by CCEMD. The credential will be active for a period of 5 years. CCEMD requires that individuals seeking re-accreditation participate in "Day 1" of an organized CERT class, and the final exercise. **Or** complete a recertification class with CCEMD, availability dependent.

**Equipment Use and Issuing:**

Pending funds and availability CCEMD will provide basic equipment to CERT volunteers **at time of certification and as needed, recertification.** CCEMD is not responsible for maintaining team equipment. Further, CCEMD maintains a cache of training equipment for affiliated CERT Teams. This must be requested in writing, and a CCEMD staff member must be present at all times. Secure storage (i.e., locked/gated) is required should the equipment be left overnight.