

CITY OF FOSTER CITY

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's)

ARTICLE 1. AUTHORITY

- A. The City of Foster City Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) receives its direction and operates at the sole discretion of the City of Foster City Fire Department (also referred to as the Foster City Fire Department or Fire Department).

ARTICLE 2. MISSION STATEMENT

- A. The Foster City Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program will train individuals in neighborhoods, businesses and industries in emergency preparedness and basic disaster response techniques, there by enabling them to prepare, as volunteers, to take an active role in providing critical support in a safe manner to emergency service personnel during emergencies/disasters.

ARTICLE 3. NAME

- A. The name of this organization is the City of Foster City Community Emergency Response Team or CERT, formed July 2007.

ARTICLE 4. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- A. CERT is about readiness, people helping people, rescuer safety, and doing the greatest good for the greatest number. CERT is part of the National Citizen Corp effort endorsed by the President of the United States and the Department of Homeland Security.
- B. CERT is a positive and realistic approach to emergency and disaster situations where citizens may initially be on their own and their actions can make a difference.
- C. CERT is designed to train, educate and inform the public regarding emergency preparedness.
- D. CERT members may seek and apply for grants, with the prior permission and approval of the City of Foster City Fire Department, from state, federal and private organizations to fund the activities and objectives of CERT.
- E. CERT members may be assigned other duties by the request of the Foster City Fire Department.

ARTICLE 5. LOCATION

- A. The principal office and meeting site for CERT shall be the City of Foster Fire Department Administrative Office, 1040 E. Hillsdale Blvd., Foster City, CA 94404

ARTICLE 6. MEETING DATES

- A. Area Coordinators will meet with a representative of the Foster City Fire Department every other month or not less than four times per year.
- B. Neighborhood Teams Leaders will meet with a representative of the Foster City Fire Department twice per year.
- C. Area Coordinators will meet with the Neighborhood Teams Leaders in their Division four times per year.
- D. Each Neighborhood Team Leader will hold Neighborhood Team meetings every other month or not less than four times per year.

ARTICLE 7. RULES OF CONDUCT

- A. Members of CERT serve at the sole discretion of the Foster City Fire Department.
- B. CERT members are volunteers of the City of Foster City. As such, their status as a volunteer is contingent on performing their assigned duties with the utmost care and consideration.
- C. 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 CERT members must use due care, diligence, and appropriate safety measures when responding or reporting, as directed, to emergencies.
- D. All participating volunteers must be trained and understand the coordinated command and control structure of CERT (see Article 11) and agree to operate within its constraints.
- E. Members of CERT are prohibited from communicating with the media and/or making representations on behalf of CERT in any manner, without the approval of the Foster City Fire Department.
- F. CERT members shall not carry or possess any weapons or be intoxicated or impaired while undertaking activities as a CERT member.
- G. CERT members shall not engage in harassment or discrimination which occurs when prohibited verbal, visual or physical conduct is directed at individuals because of their race, religion, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation (including heterosexuality, homosexuality and bisexuality), ethnic or national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, uniformed service member status, marital status, family relationship, pregnancy, age, cancer or HIV/AIDS related medical condition, genetic characteristics, and physical or mental disability (whether perceived or actual) ("protected classification"). Retaliation against any individual who has taken action either as a complainant, or for assisting a complainant in taking action, or for acting as a witness or advocate on behalf of another individual in a legal or other proceeding to obtain a remedy for a breach of this SOP, is also prohibited.

In order to constitute harassment, discrimination or retaliation, as defined by law, the prohibited verbal, visual or physical conduct must be directed at an individual because of the individual's protected classification or perceived classification, but the City has zero tolerance for any verbal, visual or physical conduct prohibited by this SOP. That means that conduct need not rise to the level of a violation of law in order to violate this SOP. Instead, a single act can violate this SOP and provide grounds for dismissal or other appropriate sanctions no matter what is motivating the behavior.

- H. CERT members shall conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. This includes avoiding or removing themselves from conflicts, and not discrediting this organization intentionally.
- I. Training topics, subject matter or activities not covered by these Standard Operating Procedures or the CERT Citizen Corp Program, must be approved by the Foster City Fire Department CERT Coordinator prior to undertaking.
- J. All CERT members are subject to dismissal from the program for not adhering to the CERT Standard Operating Procedures at the sole discretion of the Foster City Fire Department. Some examples of actions that could result in removal from the CERT program are:
 - a. Self-deployment to an incident or scene without following Article 9
 - b. Unprofessional, aggressive, insubordinate, discriminatory or harassing behavior toward other CERT members, residents, first responders, or other authorities
 - c. Failure to follow direction of public safety personnel
 - d. Conviction of a felony, or a misdemeanor, including pleas of guilty or nolo contendere.

ARTICLE 8. MEMBERSHIP

- A. City of Foster City residents may apply to be a member of the Foster City CERT Program.
- B. Volunteer applicants must be a least eighteen years of age to apply. This age limit may also be at the discretion of the Foster City Fire Department. However, any applicants under eighteen years of age must attend the program with a parent or guardian, who must sign a Parent Permission Form. (See Article 9 regarding activation and minors responding to incidents.)
- C. Applicant approval is at the sole discretion of the Foster City Fire Department.
- D. All members of the Foster City CERT Community must read and sign this document (see last page: Standard Operating Procedures Agreement) and the Hold Harmless/Permission Request form, become a Disaster Service Worker (by filling out the appropriate form) and complete Incident Command System (ICS) 100.
 - a. Members, who have completed the Training Program prior to the adoption of these Standard Operating Procedures, must read and sign this document within 30 days of receipt in order to continue participation in the Foster City CERT Program.

- E. CERT members must satisfactorily complete all modules, including Skill's Day, of the CERT Training Program.
- F. Members are required to attend at least two training classes or neighborhood meetings per year provided by (or in conjunction with) the Foster City Fire Department.
- G. CERT membership is valid for a period of 2 years. After 2 years, membership will be evaluated by the Foster City Fire Department and the Neighborhood Teams Leaders, at which point updated identification may be issued if all requirements of membership have been met.
- H. Members shall not use their CERT membership for personal gain.
- I. Many members of CERT have skills beyond what is taught through the CERT program, e.g. physicians and other health professionals, heavy equipment operators, advanced search and rescuers, etc. While these skills may be helpful during an emergency or disaster, they are outside the CERT scope of practice as a Foster City CERT member.
- J. The Foster City Fire Department respects the confidentiality of any information members provide. The Foster City Fire Department will maintain contact information (including home address, email and phone number) and will only release email addresses to Neighborhood Team Leaders and Area Coordinators for the purpose of communicating about CERT-related topics or as otherwise required by law. At any time, a CERT member may choose to "opt-out" and will not be contacted unless they request it.
- K. If a member leaves the CERT program for any reason, all issued equipment and identification shall be returned to the Foster City Fire Department within 30 days of notification.

ARTICLE 9. ACTIVATION

- A. During an emergency, CERT member activation must be approved by the Foster City Fire Chief or his/her designee.
- B. No member of CERT can self-activate. If a CERT member self-activates he/she will forfeit all protection from liability provided by the CERT program. Furthermore, the individual will be removed from the CERT program immediately.
- C. CERT members shall follow the Foster City CERT Activation guidelines (see attached).
- D. Any time a CERT member is activated; information regarding the extent of activation needs to be documented by an individual CERT member on ICS Form 214 – Unit Log. This information needs to be returned to their Team Leader / Division Supervisor at the conclusion of the operational period. At minimum, this information should include:
 - a. Name of CERT member
 - b. Assignments given and actions taken
 - c. Any outcomes, positive or negative, including injuries sustained

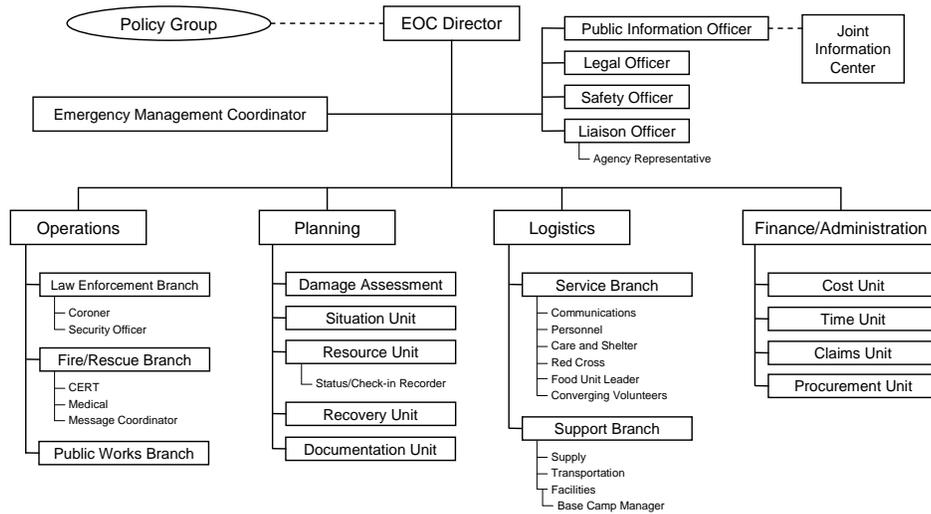
- E. CERT members must operate within the scope of their CERT training, as well as comply with all federal, state and local laws when functioning as a CERT member.
- F. Non-CERT trained volunteers are NEVER to be recruited by Foster City CERT Members to perform CERT related duties during an emergency. If approached by non-CERT trained volunteers wanting to assist, please ask that they report to the Foster City Fire Department.
- G. When activated, CERT members under the age of 18 shall remain at Command Post. Minors are not permitted to participate in CERT field team activities during a disaster.
- H. Any CERT member who suffers an injury while performing an assigned CERT task must immediately report the injury incurred to a supervising member of the Foster City Fire Department.
- I. Failure to report injuries will jeopardize a CERT Member's ability to receive worker's compensation benefits, and any recovery for such injury is specifically and expressly limited to that available under the State of California's Worker's Compensation Insurance.
- J. When activated, CERT members are covered under the State of California's Disaster Service Worker's program.
- K. Once the emergency has been resolved, the supervising member of the Foster City Fire Department will deactivate the CERT members / teams.

ARTICLE 10. CERT ROLES DURING EMERGENCIES

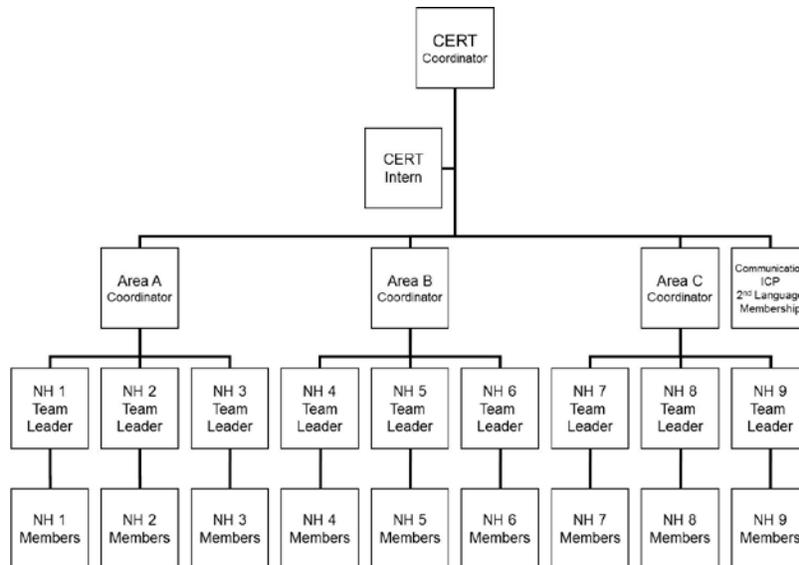
- A. When a disaster occurs, CERT members are to first take care of themselves and their families, and conduct an initial size-up of their homes or workplace. CERT members must also reduce immediate dangers by turning off utilities, suppress small fires, evacuate their immediate area, and secure their family.
- B. Once CERT members, their family and their home are secure, CERT members should report to their assigned Neighborhood Assembly Area / Command Post, gathering information along the way.
- C. Work with CERT members to establish a command post, staging area, and medical triage and treatment areas.
- D. Collect damage information and develop a plan of operation based on life-saving priorities and available resources.
- E. Apply their training to situations where CERT members can make a difference.
- F. Establish and maintain communication with responders.

ARTICLE 11. ORGANIZATION

A. City of Foster City’s Emergency Operation’s Plan Organizational Chart:



B. CERT Non-Emergency Organizational Chart:



ARTICLE 12. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Area Coordinators

- a. Appointed by the CERT Coordinator
- b. Terms normally last no more than 2 years. Terms may be extended by the CERT Coordinator.
- c. Meet with and provide updates to the CERT Coordinator every other month or not less than four times per year

- d. Meet with their Neighborhood Team Leaders four times per year
- e. Provide guidance and support to the Neighborhood Team Leaders in the following areas:
 - i. Training
 - ii. Meetings
 - iii. Maintenance of records
 - iv. Recruiting
 - v. Other issues as they arise
- f. The role of Area Coordinator is administrative in nature, not operational. In a disaster everyone is a "CERT." Area Coordinators or Neighborhood Team Leaders may or may not act as the Division Supervisor or even work at a Command Post.

B. Neighborhood Team Leaders

- a. Appointed by the CERT Coordinator
- b. Terms normally last no more than 2 years. Terms may be extended by the CERT Coordinator.
- c. Hold Neighborhood Team meetings every other month or not less than four times per year.
- d. Meet with your Area Coordinator four times per year
- e. Meet with a representative of the Foster City Fire Department twice per year.
- f. Plan training exercises for their team in accordance with Article 14: Training.
- g. Maintain attendance records (training & meetings)
- h. Maintain meeting notes & training records.
- i. Develop their skills and their team's ability to respond in a disaster
- j. Neighborhood Team Leader's role is administrative in nature, not operational. In a disaster everyone is a "CERT." Area Coordinators or Neighborhood Team Leaders may or may not act as the Division Supervisor or even work at a Command Post.

C. Topic-specific coordinator positions

- a. Appointed by the CERT Coordinator
- b. Terms normally last no more than 2 years. Terms may be extended by the CERT Coordinator.

- c. Plan and conduct training exercises in accordance with Article 14: Training.
- d. Create training materials, with approval of the CERT Coordinator.

D. Team Members

- a. Comply with the standards established in these Standard Operating Procedures.

ARTICLE 13. IDENTIFICATION

- A. CERT identification must be worn on the outermost garment at all times. If the card is lost it will be the responsibility of the team member to request a replacement.
- B. In emergency situations, members must wear the issued green CERT vest, identification card and appropriate PPE's (Personal Protection Equipment).

ARTICLE 14. TRAINING

- A. CERT training is in accordance with the current Federal Emergency Management Agency and California Citizen's Corps guidelines.
- B. Each CERT member will receive a book or digital copy of the CERT Participant Manual.
- C. All training presented to CERT members, including materials, must be reviewed and approved by the Foster City Fire Department prior to use and distribution.

ARTICLE 15. FINANCES

- A. All funds received by Foster City CERT, including but not limited to grant awards, donations, proceeds from fund raising will be deposited with and controlled by the Foster City Fire Department.
- B. All purchase requests shall be submitted in writing to the Foster City Fire Department for review and approval.

ARTICLE 16. ELECTRONIC, PRINTED MEDIA AND INTERVIEWS

- A. The Foster City Fire Department shall approve the substance and content of all electronic and printed media that is associated with or related to the Foster City CERT Program. Included is anything that is identified with the Foster City CERT logo or the Foster City CERT name or acronym.
- B. The exception is personal e-mail, or correspondence between members.

ARTICLE 17. ADDENDUMS

- A. In order to address specific needs or future topics, addendums may be added to these Standard Operating Procedures.



Standard Operating Procedures Agreement

I have read and understand the CERT Standard Operating Procedures. I agree to follow these Standard Operating Procedures while participating in the Foster City Fire Department CERT program. I understand that not following these Standard Operating Procedures may result in my removal from the program at the sole discretion of the Foster City Fire Department.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Neighborhood