

**Santa Cruz County Community Emergency Response Team
(CERT)
Operating Procedures and Activation Policy**

ARTICLE 1. AUTHORITY

A. Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) receives its direction and operates at the sole discretion of the CERT Council, CERT Auxiliary, and the Fire Protection District, hereafter referred to as the district.

ARTICLE 2. MISSION STATEMENT

A. The County of Santa Cruz CERT program will train individuals in neighborhoods, businesses, and industries in emergency preparedness and basic disaster response techniques, thereby 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 Santa Cruz County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

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 and California Citizen Corp effort endorsed by the Governor of California, the President of the United States, the Agencies of Homeland Security, and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services.

B. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), maintains and certifies the CERT program, California Citizen's Corps provides additional guidelines for the State of California.

C. 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.

D. CERT is designed to train, educate, and inform the public regarding emergency preparedness.

E. CERT members may be assigned other duties by the request of the District Fire Branch Manager.

ARTICLE 5. ACTIVATION

The Team will activate when the District Fire Branch Manager, Law, OES or the Incident IC determines that professional first responders need additional assets and/or support that is within the scope of CERT training. The most likely event that will cause this activation would be a large-scale earthquake or other area-wide emergency. Members will be directed to report to the area designated by the District Fire Branch Manager.

Team Members do not self-activate.

REMEMBER – When you receive official activation notification, first take care of yourself, your family, and your home and then respond to the designated reporting location.

UPON ACTIVATION

A. During an emergency, CERT member activation must be approved by the District Fire Branch Manager, Law, OES or the Incident IC. The activating agency will notify OES.

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 Disaster Service Worker Program. Furthermore, the individual may be removed from the CERT Program immediately.

C. CERT members shall follow the County of Santa Cruz CERT Activation guidelines noted above.

D. Any time a CERT member is activated, information regarding the extent of activation must be documented by individual CERT members on ICS Form 214- Unit Log and by the Team Manager or the IC on a Daily Volunteer Time Log. This information needs to be returned to CERT Incident Commander at the conclusion of the operational period. At a minimum, this information should include:

1. Name of CERT member and badge number.
2. Time and Location of Activation
3. Assignments given and actions taken.
4. Any outcomes, positive or negative, including injuries sustained.
5. Time and Location of Deactivation

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. Only County of Santa Cruz CERT credentialed volunteers may be mobilized. If approached by non-CERT trained volunteers wanting to assist, please ask they report to the County of Santa Cruz Volunteer Program.

G. When activated, CERT members under the age of 18 shall remain at the Incident Command Post. Minors are not permitted to participate in CERT field team activities during a disaster.

H. When activated, CERT members are covered under the State of California's Disaster Service Worker's Program.

I. Any CERT member who suffers an injury while performing an assigned CERT task must immediately report the injury to their supervisor who will pass it through the chain of command to the branch manager. If unable to contact immediate supervisor they shall contact 911.

J. Once the emergency has been resolved, the supervising branch manager will deactivate the CERT members/teams and make appropriate notifications.

ARTICLE 6. MEETING TIMES AND LOCATIONS

A. The CERT Team Liaison will meet or make contact with the Fire Branch Managers or his/her designee every other month, or not less than four times per year.

B. CERT Teams shall establish a goal of meeting each month. Meetings will provide for both training and the distribution of general information. Meetings may be rescheduled by the Fire Branch Manager to accommodate for holidays or training opportunities.

ARTICLE 7. RULES OF CONDUCT

A. CERT members shall follow the CERT Auxiliary Code of Conduct. (Appendix A)

B. Members of CERT serve at the discretion of OES, Law and the Fire Branch Manager.

C. CERT members are volunteers of the County of Santa Cruz and fall under direction of OES, Law and the Fire Branch Manager. As such, their status as a

volunteer is contingent upon performing their assigned duties with the utmost care and consideration.

D. 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, CERT members must use due care, diligence, and appropriate safety measures when responding or reporting, as directed, to emergencies.

E. Training topics, subject matter or activities not covered by the FEMA Community Emergency Response Team Program must be approved by Fire Branch Manager prior to undertaking.

F. All CERT members are subject to dismissal from the program for not adhering to these Operations Procedures and Activation Policy at the discretion of OES, Law, the Fire Branch Manager, and CERT Team Leaders. Some examples of actions that could result in removal from the CERT program are:

1. Self-deployment to an incident or scene without following Article 5
2. Unprofessional, aggressive, insubordinate, discriminatory or harassing behavior toward other CERT members, residents, first responders, or other authorities.
3. Failure to follow direction of public safety personnel.
4. Conviction of a felony or misdemeanor, including pleas of guilty or nolo contendere.

ARTICLE 8. MEMBERSHIP

A. Both residents and non-residents of the County of Santa Cruz area may apply to be a member of the County of Santa Cruz CERT Team.

B. Volunteer applicants must be at least 16 years of age to apply.

C. Applicant approval is at the sole discretion of County of Santa Cruz Clerk designee. The Santa Cruz County Office of Emergency Services shall maintain the roster of active County of Santa Cruz CERT members.

D. All members of the County of Santa Cruz CERT must read and sign this document (see last page: Operations Procedures and Activation Policy) and become a Disaster Service Worker (by filling out the appropriate form). Proof of completion of ICS 100 is required and must be renewed every five years to maintain CERT membership.

Note: Members who have completed the Training Program prior to the adoption of these Operations Procedures and Activation Policy must read and sign this

document within 90 days of receipt in order to continue participation in the CERT Program.

E. CERT members from other jurisdictions must satisfactorily complete all modules, including the Skills Session, of the CERT Training Program.

F. Members are expected to meet the guidelines for CERT Auxiliary Recertification.

G. Members shall not use CERT for their personal gain.

H. 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 County of Santa Cruz CERT member.

I. The County of Santa Cruz, the Fire Branch Manager and the CERT team leaders shall respect the confidentiality of any personal information members provide. County of Santa Cruz shall maintain contact information (including home addresses, email and phone number) and will only release phone numbers and email addresses to Fire Branch Manager, team leaders and other appropriate team members for the purpose of communicating about CERT related topics, or as otherwise required by law. At any time, a CERT member may choose to become inactive and will not be contacted unless they request reinstatement.

J. If a member leaves the CERT Program for any reason, CERT issued helmet, vest and identification shall be returned to the team leader or Fire Branch Manager.

K. Members of other CERT programs may apply for memberships in County of Santa Cruz CERT.

ARTICLE 9. LOCATION

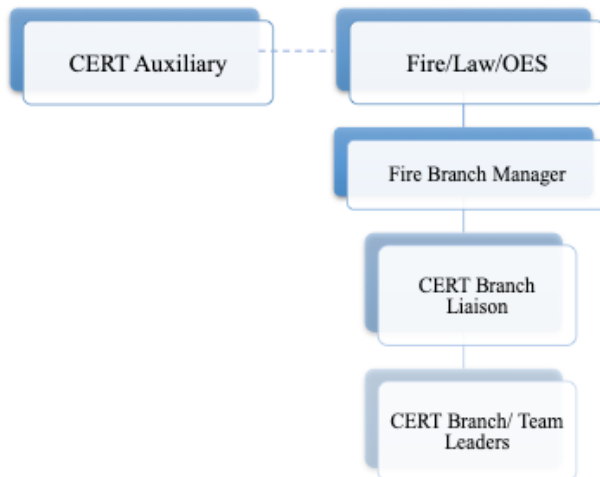
The principle office for the County of Santa Cruz shall be County of Santa Cruz Office of Emergency Services located at 5200 Soquel Avenue, Building C, Second Floor, Santa Cruz, CA

ARTICLE 10. CERT ROLES DURING EMERGENCIES

A. When a disaster occurs, CERT members are to 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 homes are secure, CERT members should report to the predesignated area, gathering information along the way.
- C. Form teams and use the 214 unit log to collect damage information in the designated zones, reporting this information as instructed.
- D. When requested, work with CERT members to establish a command post, staging area, and medical triage and treatment areas.
- E. Apply their training to situations where CERT members can make a difference.
- F. Establish and maintain communication with responders.

ARTICLE 11. ORGANIZATION



ARTICLE 12. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. CERT Branch Liaison(s)
 - 1. Appointed by Fire Branch Manager
 - 2. Terms normally last no more than 2 years. Terms may be extended by The Fire Branch Manager.
 - 3. Meet with CERT Team Leaders as needed by Fire Branch Manager.
 - 4. This is the single point of contact between the Fire Branch Manager and their area CERT teams.
 - 5. The role of CERT Branch Liaison is administrative in nature, not operational in emergency situations.
- B. Team Members

1. Comply with the standards established in these Operations Procedures and Activation Policy.

ARTICLE 13. IDENTIFICATION AND APPAREL

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 through CERT Auxiliary Branch Manager.

B. In emergency situations, members must wear the issued CERT vest and hard-hat. Members need to dress for the conditions and should always wear long pants and closed toed shoes. During non-emergency situations, members need to wear the issued CERT vest or other purchased clothing containing the CERT logo. It is the responsibility of the team member to maintain all garments in a presentable manner. Authorized CERT apparel will only be worn during DSW authorized activities.

ARTICLE 14. PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

Each CERT member who operates in the field will be issued the following required equipment, and PPE. The suggested supplements are a list of equipment that is nice to have but not required. (equipment must be properly maintained and readily available for response. Members must bring equipment to the staging area):

REQUIRED:

- CERT vest
- CERT ID
- CERT helmet w/chin strap

PPE:

- Goggles
- Dust masks (N95 rated)
- Work gloves
- Personal First Aid Kit
- Whistle
- Israeli Bandage
- Flashlight(s) w/batteries
- Glow sticks
- Duct Tape
- Gas/ Water Shut Off Tool

SUGGESTED SUPPLEMENTS:

- CERT Field Operations Guide

- Poncho
- Carabineers
- Lumber crayons or marker
- Utility knife
- EMT shears/scissors
- Latex Gloves
- Hat (sun protection)
- Multi-tool
- Paper w/pen-pencil
- Bottled water
- Food (energy bars)

ARTICLE 15. TRAINING

A. The CERT training provided to members is in accordance with the current Federal Management Agency and California Citizen’s Corps/ California Volunteer guidelines.

B. Each CERT member will receive a book or digital copy of the CERT Participant Training Manual.

ARTICLE 16. FINANCES

A. All funds received by County of Santa Cruz CERT teams, including, but not limited: to grant awards, donations, and proceeds from fundraising activities, shall be deposited with and managed by the CERT Auxiliary of Santa Cruz County.

B. All financial requests shall be submitted in writing to CERT Auxiliary of Santa Cruz County.

C. Invoices, receipts and purchase documentation shall be provided to CERT Auxiliary of Santa Cruz County.

ARTICLE 17. PRINTED MEDIA, ELECTRONIC/SOCIAL MEDIA, AND INTERVIEWS

A. The County of Santa Cruz CERT will follow the County of Santa Cruz Social Media Policy.

ARTICLE 18. ADDENDUMS

A. In order to address specific needs or future topics, addendums may be added to these Operations Procedures and Activation Policy.

Operations Procedures and Activation Policy Agreement

I have read and understand the CERT Operations Procedures and Activation Policy. I agree to follow these Operations Procedures and Activation Policy while participating in the County of Santa Cruz CERT Program. I understand that not following these Operations Procedures and Activation Policy may result in my removal from the program at the sole discretion of County of Santa Cruz.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name Address