

North Coast Community Emergency Response Team Volunteer Handbook



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Notice

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Authority

Policies and procedures set herein are established by the Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County EMA directors. Recommendations for policy and procedure changes are developed and approved by the EMA Directors.

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Introduction

Welcome to the North Coast Community Emergency Response Team (NCCERT). We're glad to have you on our team! This handbook is designed to provide you with an introduction to NCCERT and orient you to what you can expect from the group and what is expected of you as a volunteer.

Your decision to join is a great contribution to the safety and welfare of our community. We hope that volunteer participation will be a rewarding experience. You are to be commended for your willingness to give of your time and efforts in the protection and care of your community.

As with most volunteer organizations, NCCERT depends on its volunteer participation for success. Our organization is the sum of its volunteers' efforts and contributions. For the group to succeed and prosper, its volunteers must have a sense of commitment and dedication to the purpose of the organization, that of helping others in distress.

NCCERT is dedicated to helping our community. Our intent is to help our local communities during disasters and other times of need where and when assistance is needed, without regard for personal convenience. It is our goal to help our communities prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters and other incidents that cause suffering and damages. NCCERT is a volunteer service organization with a strong emphasis on *servicing*.

This handbook will guide you in your function within the group. It is broken down into the following sections:

- **Introduction:** This section contains an overview of NCCERT.
- **Volunteer participation:** This section contains requirements for joining and being an active volunteer of NCCERT.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** This section contains SOPs for NCCERT volunteers that explain how the organization functions.
- **Activation Procedures:** This section describes the various types of activations and how they will be communicated to volunteers.

As a response organization, we must maintain uniformity in our volunteers' contact with the public; this guide will assist you in meeting the necessary standards. A volunteer should have a thorough knowledge of NCCERT and a commitment to the group's mission and values. If you understand and appreciate NCCERT policies and values, you'll be better able to contribute in an effective and meaningful manner. Please read this guide carefully and keep it handy for future reference.

Purpose

NCCERT was formed to provide volunteer assistance to first responders and the community at large during disasters and other times of need. CERT promotes public health and safety across Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County by focusing on participation in two key areas:

1. **Natural Disasters/Large Scale Response Incidents** – events that cause injury or threats to large numbers of people or concentrated areas of occupancy. These incidents can include fires, storms, floods, and other incidents that displace residents and require a prolonged response from the public safety or health community. CERT will respond to assist first responders and community volunteers any time the local resources are overwhelmed or in need of general assistance by volunteer forces.
2. **Community Service Activities** – opportunities to foster the well-being of local residents and promote the mission of NCCERT, such as health fairs, blood pressure clinics or training programs, or events that are particular to the first responders CERT assists in the course of doing regular business.

NCCERT is registered as a Community Emergency Response Team as defined by the United States Department of Homeland Security (USDHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). NCCERT is registered in the State of Ohio with the Ohio Responds disaster volunteer system.

History

Following the events of September 11, 2001, it became clear that a mechanism to organize and coordinate volunteer efforts to assist local first responders in time of need was essential. In the days and months following these events, thousands of well-meaning volunteers flocked to disaster scenes to offer assistance. Because there was no mechanism to organize volunteers, verify credentials or backgrounds, or assign them to perform needed tasks, many volunteers were turned away. Response needs went unmet, and human resource needs were insufficient when volunteers were not used effectively and efficiently.

In 2002, the Community Corps program was formed nationally, of which the Community Emergency Response Team program is a part. Grants were first issued to newly formed units that same year, and have continued to support team development across the county. Since then, more than 800 units have been created nationwide and 175,000 volunteers have been trained and registered in the system.

In late 2007, the Erie County Emergency Management Agency saw the need for a local CERT and began working to develop one. Bill Walker and Sandy Waggoner developed the first grant application for funding, and that was awarded in late 2008. Initial training for the first Erie County CERT began in February 2009, and the team was ready to respond by March of 2009.

In June 2010, devastating tornadoes ripped through Northwest Ohio. Ottawa County was affected in Allen Township, and called upon Erie County CERT to assist. Later that year, the EMA began working to develop an Ottawa County team. At the same time, Huron County

began efforts to develop a CERT. The new counties relied upon volunteers and coordinators from Erie County to help, and in 2011 the three county's efforts merged into North Coast CERT.

NCCERT was officially registered as a CERT unit in February 2011 and continues to recruit, train and prepare volunteers to respond in our community. As of early 2015, NCCERT has 106 volunteers, and meets monthly in each county to train and prepare.

Mission Statement

The mission of North Coast CERT is to foster community preparedness and resiliency through efforts to recruit, organize, train and prepare volunteers to support local response to natural disasters and other emergency situations in Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County and surrounding counties; and to promote and foster Community disaster preparedness through public education and community outreach. The tasks provided by NCCERT will fill gaps in local capabilities and capacity, and will support and enhance the local ability to respond to incidents and events. NCCERT will promote and facilitate the effective and efficient use of volunteer resources during disasters and other preparedness activities that require the engagement of community resources. NCCERT will partner and collaborate with other first responders, agencies, and organizations when possible and prudent to maximize the effectiveness of overall response efforts, and to act in the best interest of the victims of disasters, mass casualty incidents, and large-scale emergencies.

Goals and Objectives

The goals of NCCERT include the following:

- Recruit volunteers to serve the community during disasters, mass casualties, large-scale emergencies, and disaster preparedness activities.
- Provide training for volunteers to prepare them to serve in a variety of capacities during disaster response, recovery, and preparedness activities.
- Promote personal and family emergency preparedness in our community through public education and outreach.
- Provide resources to governmental and non-governmental organizations during emergency and disaster response and recovery
- Promote, enhance, and foster collaboration in disaster preparedness and planning through comprehensive response plans and corroboration between NCCERT and other disaster and emergency responders in the county

Principles of Operation

NCCERT will operate according to the following principles:

- We treat all people, be they victims, other volunteers, clients or coworkers with respect and dignity in all situations and under all circumstances.
- We will serve victims, organizations, and agencies without bias or prejudice of any kind, treating all who ask for our assistance with respect and honor.

- We will show respect to those who lead our communities through normal and disaster-filled days, maintaining a positive, professional image as a part of the response community.
- We honor the fact that volunteers are donating their time and expertise for the overall health and well-being of their communities as well as their commitment to a multitude of training programs to be of service during times of need and activation.
- We will communicate clearly and consistently with volunteers, with each other, with team leaders, and with others involved in all activities.
- Input from volunteers is encouraged and valued by leadership, and should be given with respect and courtesy during both normal days and times of disaster.
- No volunteer will be asked to perform beyond the scope of his or her licensure, credentials, training or comfort level, but each volunteer is responsible for conveying their limitations to team leadership.
- No volunteer will be knowingly placed at unreasonable risk during training or activation.
- Volunteers have the option to refuse assignments for any reason.
- When they are invited to participate, response to disasters outside the local community and region are at the volunteer's discretion.
- No volunteer will self-deploy to any incident or event. Involvement in any incident or event under the name of NCCERT is strictly at the discretion and initiation of the Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County EMA Directors.
- NCCERT will consistently seek inclusion of Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County residents across all demographics, thereby truly representing the communities of Erie, Huron, and Ottawa Counties.
- Volunteers from the community with functional limitations may participate in NCCERT activities as is reasonable and safe. Volunteers with functional needs are expected to disclose those limitations to the team coordinator so that appropriate assignments can be made, and are expected to refuse assignments that may endanger or hurt them due to their limitations.

Organization and Administration

NCCERT is housed within the Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County Emergency Management Agencies and reports directly, through the team Coordinator, to the Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County EMA Directors. The unit is governed by an Executive Committee with input and advice from the Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County Citizen Corps Council. The Executive Committee consists of the Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County EMA Directors, Coordinator, and Deputy Coordinator. The Coordinator and Deputy Coordinator are provided by Resource Solutions Associates LLC under contract with the county EMA offices. Day-to-day unit operations are managed by the team Coordinator and Deputy Coordinator.

The Citizen Corps Council meets on an as-needed basis to advise the Executive Committee on community input and overall direction of the unit. The EMA Director is not required to obtain approval of the Citizen Corps Council to take action or to make decisions; the Council is purely advisory in nature. The EMA Director is the sole authority in the operation of NCCERT, and

delegates the authority to manage the team to the Coordinator. The Team Coordinator may, as necessary, delegate authority and responsibility to the Deputy Coordinator and other team leaders for the purpose of carrying out specific missions assigned by the EMA director(s).

The Citizen Corps Council is comprised of volunteers from many of NCCERT's partner organizations and other community organizations, including other disaster response agencies, health care and public health providers, local jurisdictions, and other community leaders.

Participation on the Citizen Corps Council is open to additional organizations with an interest in disaster preparedness in Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County. Applications for volunteer participation are reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee is comprised of the EMA Directors, Unit Director and Deputy Coordinator. This group meets regularly to review unit activities, recruiting and training. Contact information for the Executive Committee is as follows:

EMA Director:	Tim Jonovich (419)627-7617 Office tjonovich@eriecounty.oh.gov
	Jason Roblin (419) 663-5772 Office director@Huroncountyema.gov
	Fred Petersen (419) 734-6900 Office fpetersen@co.ottawa.oh.us
Coordinator:	Sandy Waggoner-Hovest (419) 602-0758 Office (419) 602-7488 24-hour / Cellular sandy@consultrsa.com
Deputy Coordinator:	Lauren Yeagle (419) 602-0758 Office (419) 262-0229 24-hour / Cellular lauren@consultrsa.com
Team website:	www.northcoastcert.com E-mail: volunteer@northcoastcert.com

Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County CERT Volunteer participation

Volunteer participation in NCCERT is open to individuals residing, working, or having an interest in Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County and surrounding counties that may not have an active CERT organization. Anyone who meets the following eligibility requirements is eligible to become a volunteer:

- Be at least 18 years of age at the time of application
- Complete an approved Volunteer Application
- Register in *Ohio Responds*, Ohio Community Corps' volunteer registration database
- Complete either an approved 20-Hour Basic CERT training course provided locally, or supply a Certificate of Completion for an equivalent course by an approved provider, or complete IS-317 Introduction to Basic CERT at the FEMA online portal of courses.
- Possess a valid State of Ohio driver's license and a good driving record, with proof of insurance when requested (If not able to do so, assignments that require valid driving rights will not be made for any NCCERT activities but volunteer participation may be approved on an individual basis by the EMA Director and Team Coordinator.)
- Have a suitable legal history including absence of felony convictions or pending charges for felonies or misdemeanors, misdemeanor convictions that include moral turpitude, or repeated drug or alcohol related charges, domestic violence, or crimes against another person. Volunteers may be required to provide proof of their legal record through submission of a BCI/FBI background check at their own cost.
- Be free of chemical and other addictions and not under the influence of or use of illicit drugs or misuse of prescribed or over the counter medications, or alcohol. Volunteers may be required to submit medical proof of such through testing by a medical lab or physician at their own cost if justifiable cause exists to question their status.
- Be physically and mentally able to perform work done by NCCERT with reasonable accommodation if necessary
- Be willing to function according to the rules and procedures established by the EMA directors
- Be willing to portray NCCERT in a professional manner at all times, and to refrain from activities that would degrade or diminish the credibility of NCCERT.

Recruitment

Recruitment is an ongoing priority for NCCERT. New volunteers will be recruited utilizing a variety of methods, including:

- Word of mouth from current volunteers
- Presentations to community organizations and potential response partners
- Information tables at health fairs and community events
- Use of social media, including Facebook, Twitter, and others
- Use of digital tools such as websites and virtual bulletin boards
- Meetings with municipal agencies and healthcare organizations
- Presentations at local colleges, universities and technical training programs
- Joint marketing with related agencies
- Mass media information campaigns

- Distribution of team promotional materials at trade shows, conventions, and other meetings of first responders and community leaders and groups.

Volunteer Orientation

The first step in joining NCCERT is completion of the volunteer application. Applications are available by contacting the Unit Coordinator.

All applications will be reviewed by the Coordinator and credentials verified before referring the vetted applications to the EMA Director for approval. The EMA Director may choose to approve the application, approve the application with conditions, or not approve the application. The EMA director may consult with local law enforcement if questions about the applicant's legal history exist and are relevant to the volunteer applicant's request for acceptance.

Volunteers may be required to submit a BCI & I and/or FBI background check, and local authorities may be consulted about the appropriateness of an applicant's admission to NCCERT by sharing the applications with them. Falsification or incomplete disclosure of information on an application will be considered dishonest and the candidate will be subject to volunteer participation refusal or disciplinary action if admitted. Critical information can include, but may not be limited to, information about a potential volunteer's legal background, professional credentials, personal experience, or physical and/or mental capabilities or disabilities. Only those disabilities disclosed to the EMA Director and/or Team Coordinator can be accommodated under ADA, and even obvious disabilities may not be accommodated if disclosure is refused.

When the EMA Director or Team Coordinator have questions involving the legal background of an applicant, that applicant may be required to submit a legal background check document through the local sheriff or other agency to be considered for the team, at the applicant's expense. NCCERT will not reimburse or pay for background checks for any volunteer regardless of the results. If there is reason to believe the applicant has a legal history in a state other than Ohio, the EMA Director may request that applicant furnish proof of history from that state or the FBI. NCCERT will not cover the cost of that background check, or reimburse for any reason.

Potential volunteers will complete a volunteer orientation, which provides basic information on how the unit is structured and basic safety information that addresses the risks to personal safety common to disaster responses. This orientation provides the volunteer with information about the CERT system, an overview of NCCERT structure and introduces the volunteer to the basic concepts of disaster response in a safe and procedure-driven manner. The volunteer will sign a verification of attendance at that orientation, and that verification will become a part of the volunteer's permanent record with NCCERT. This orientation may be provided in a variety of ways using varied media to achieve completion in a convenient way.

Upon completion of this step, the volunteer will become an active team volunteer and receive team identification credentials. Only at this point may the individual represent himself/herself as a “North Coast CERT volunteer”.

Basic Training

Volunteers are required to complete four courses as part of the basic training required for volunteer participation. These courses include:

- IS 317 Introduction to Community Emergency Response Teams – this online course written and provided by FEMA takes approximately 8 hours to complete. It discusses disaster preparedness, fire and utility safety, triage and first aid, disaster psychology, and terrorism awareness. A digital certificate is provided by FEMA upon successful online completion. * **
- IS 100, Introduction to Incident Command: This course is offered online through FEMA and is free to the volunteer. It takes approximately 3 hours to complete this course and a digital certificate is provided by FEMA upon successful completion.
- IS 700, National Incident Management System: This course is offered online through FEMA and is free to the volunteer. It takes approximately 3 hours to complete this course and a digital certificate is provided by FEMA upon successful completion.
- Health and Safety Orientation for Disaster Workers – This is a 2 hour course in establishing and maintaining safe operations on disaster jobs.

* The face-to-face Basic CERT 20-hour course may be substituted for IS 317 when provided by a FEMA or Ohio certified instructor with an appropriate Certificate of Completion. Certificate of Completion serves as evidence of completion.

** The Coordinator based upon the personal professional experience and training of an individual, may waive completion of this part of the training, using instead training or certification of the personal as a firefighter, police officer, emergency medical technician, paramedic, or military professional. This is done entirely at the discretion of the Team Coordinator whose decision is final and binding.

Upon completion of basic training, volunteers will receive an identification badge and be eligible to fulfill an assigned role in activation at an emergency or event.

Advanced Training

To maintain sharp skills and to meet the ever-changing demands of response, it is important for volunteers to participate in ongoing training activities. This also allows volunteers to develop specialized skills to fill specific roles within a disaster response or leadership roles within the team.

Ongoing training is provided at monthly meetings approximately ten times per year. Special training may be provided at any time during the year, or at the job site prior to assignment

when appropriate. Training topics, times, and locations are announced to volunteers during the year through emails, newsletters (electronic by default, and postal mail only upon request), and phone calls. Monthly meetings or special training may be held at the Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County EMA or another location if necessary. Volunteers are expected to respond to requests for reservations as frequently as possible, and some training may require a reservation when written materials or food is provided, registration fees are paid, or for safety reasons an instructor to student ratio must be maintained.

Joint training may be offered in conjunction with other volunteer organizations with which CERT works on a regular basis. For example, Red Cross training in sheltering, mass care, damage assessment, or other mission areas may be offered to CERT volunteers. Other groups include organizations such as ARES, Salvation Army, Medical Reserve Corps, and the EMA. When those courses are offered, participants may be required to meet additional criteria for certification, such as to pass a background check for participation as a shelter worker for Red Cross. Dual requirements may apply in order for CERT volunteers to be considered “qualified” by multiple organizations. Volunteers will have the option to take this kind of training “for information only” or “for certification” with commensurate requirements.

To maintain active volunteer participation and eligibility to deploy, each volunteer should attend at least one monthly training session per calendar year. Volunteers who teach sessions will be considered to have completed training and should sign attendance sheets as participants. Failure to meet this requirement will result in removal from the team roster unless CERT volunteer is affected by unusual circumstances that have caused the absences, and has made those circumstances known to the Coordinator or EMA Director. The Coordinator and/or EMA Director may make exceptions to this based upon professional qualifications or alternative training completion.

Additional trainings, drill and exercises may be offered throughout the year to establish and maintain a regional team capability as part of the Disaster Volunteer Coalition. The schedule for these trainings will be announced in the same manner as other regular training, and can include the following courses as well as other training:

- Volunteer Reception Center Management
- Donations Management
- First Aid and CPR certification
- Hazardous Materials Awareness
- Damage Assessment training
- Animal Response I and II
- Leadership Training I and II

Other training may be offered to NCCERT volunteers throughout the year. The topics may include the following, or may include other topics of interest initiated by the Unit Coordinator, first responders, the Community Corps Advisory Council, or the EMA Director. These are voluntary training and if a cost is associated with the course, NCCERT volunteer may be asked

to cover that cost. These courses are NOT mandatory training. These may include, but not necessarily be limited to the following:

- Terrorism Awareness and Recognition
- Psychological First Aid
- Crisis and Stress Management
- Disaster Triage and Treatment
- Emergency Operations Center Management
- Blood-borne Pathogens
- Mass Dispensing Clinics/PODs
- Skywarn classes and other weather related training
- Amateur radio courses
- Other courses provided by the Ohio EMA and the Emergency Management Institute

NCCERT volunteers should provide copies of Certificates of Completion for relevant training courses they complete throughout the year. NCCERT is NOT responsible for maintaining any professional continuing education or other training records for its volunteers. Certificates of Completion will be issued by NCCERT for all team training, and each volunteer will receive a copy of their certificate for their own personal professional records.

Continuing education credits for professional credentials (such as nursing, emergency medical technician, firefighter, peace officer, etc.) are NOT issued and NCCERT training is not necessarily eligible for such credit. Any expectations of CEU type credit must be brought to the attention of the Coordinator at a time prior to the start of the course in consideration. When possible, the Coordinator will work with volunteers to provide the necessary information for the volunteer to obtain professional credit for training, if possible and reasonable. NCCERT does not provide accredited or approved continuing professional credit for its volunteers or affiliates.

Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities

Due to the nature of work NCCERT may be asked to perform, it is critical that all volunteers adhere to the guidelines outlined in this section. They are designed to streamline the function of the unit and provide a safe work environment for all activations. Failure to follow the rules in this entire document is reason for dismissal.

Volunteer Roles

The range of possible activities is as diverse as NCCERT's volunteer participation. This section offers a partial list of potential volunteer roles.

Levels of Involvement

- *Local*: the primary focus of NCCERT is local response. Volunteers are first invited to provide service in our local community.
- *Regional*: if the need arises, volunteers may be asked to respond to other cities and counties within our region, such as adjacent and nearby counties and communities. Of

particular possibility is the five-county region for the North Central Ohio CERT Consortium, including Erie, Huron, Ottawa, Sandusky, and Seneca counties and the cities and townships therein.

- *State and National:* during a statewide or national disaster, CERT units from across the country may be asked to respond. The choice of whether to call volunteers rests with the Coordinator, and all response is purely voluntary.

Activation procedures and assignment will be practiced during training and drills and refined as necessary. Volunteers are always able to refuse assignment based upon personal or professional reasons that make them unable to commit the necessary resources to the mission.

Types of Service

Roles and responsibilities depend on the volunteer's physical and mental ability, interest, training and expertise. All service is voluntary and at the comfort level of the volunteer. If an assignment is accepted, it is assumed, however, that the volunteer is comfortable with it and can perform the needed tasks reasonably well in accordance with team procedures.

Responsibilities can include the following:

- Volunteer reception center operations
- Volunteer management
- Safety orientations/officer related work
- Liaison Officer duties
- Damage assessment
- Victim assistance coordination and documentation
- Donations management and bulk distribution
- Patient or client intake (basic data forms)
- Assistance at an Acute Care Center or Neighborhood Care Center
- Shelter assistance to American Red Cross or others
- Basic Traffic Control under the direction of law enforcement
- Administrative tasks as recorders, scribes, or clerical assistants
- Victim registration and tracking
- Logistical support for responders
- Food distribution and preparation
- Record keeping and errand running
- Comforting and consoling victims and responders
- Basic Pet Care and Sheltering
- Basic First Aid including triage and transport duties
- Basic extrication from relatively safe environments
- Debris removal
- *Other duties as needed and approved*

Volunteer Responsibilities

NCCERT volunteers will:

- Provide quality care and service to people without regard to race, color, sex, creed, religion, national origin, age or handicap.
- Be receptive to training that will make them more aware of the social and physical needs of the persons being served and other training appropriate to our mission.
- Support and supplement the work of other volunteers.
- Respect confidentiality of all information pertaining to the work site in which they volunteer or pertaining to recipients of service.
- Act in a professional and competent manner at all times, and represent the Community Corps program and Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County professionally and credibly.
- Assist in the general promotion of NCCERT and participate in its activities and objectives.
- Complete records and reports accurately.
- Follow directions as provided by team leadership and from within the Incident Command System structure.
- Respect, value and follow the rules and procedures of NCCERT.
- When deployed outside Erie, Huron, and Ottawa Counties, follow the directives and orders of supervisors
- Cooperate and communicate within the team and external to the team to facilitate smooth, effective results of CERT efforts.
- Make disabilities and special needs known to the Team Coordinator with the purpose of effectively and safely assigning duties and responsibilities to each person.

Communication

Effective communication is critically important for NCCERT to achieve its goals and objectives, whether it is communication between team volunteers or communication to external groups. The following sections provide guidelines for internal and external communication.

Internal Communication

The team leadership will utilize the most efficient means possible to communicate with volunteers. Communication will include information on trainings, drills, activations and other team issues. Methods of communication will include:

- *Ohio Responds*: This state-sponsored database is the official registry system for volunteers and may be utilized to notify volunteers of activations. Volunteers are required to register in this database.
- *County-based call-out systems such as Everbridge*: *These county systems are activation and notification systems implemented at the local level, and will provide the basis for most activation and deployment. These are free systems, and NCCERT volunteers are required to sign up for notifications through the prescribed local system for activation purposes.*
- *E-Mail*: Email is the most efficient method of communication information to the entire team and will be the primary source of communication for training and general information. Postal mail will be used ONLY upon request of the volunteer when email is

not available or dependable. Volunteers should insure that the Coordinator always has a current, valid email address on file for them.

- *Direct Phone Calls:* Direct phone contact is time-consuming and will only be used when necessary. Text messaging may be used as an alternative, and volunteers should notify the unit Coordinator if they do NOT have the capability to receive text messages. When phone numbers change, it is the responsibility of the volunteer to notify the Coordinator of changes.
- *Social media:* Team Coordinators may use social media to reach both internally and externally. Volunteers are encouraged to access both Facebook and Twitter for important information in a timely fashion.
- *Phone Trees:* Phone trees may be developed to more quickly disseminate information via phone to the entire team.
- *Printed Mail:* Traditional mailings will be used on a very limited basis due to the expense and time involved. However, there may be times when this is the most appropriate method to distribute information. Volunteers should insure that the Coordinator always has a current postal address on file for them.
- *Meetings and Training Sessions:* Every time volunteers congregate, there is an opportunity to strengthen communications. Any scheduled session may include team announcements, socializing and informal sharing of ideas.
- *Note:* It is the responsibility of NCCERT volunteer to keep the Coordinator and Director updated with new contact information like cell phone numbers and email addresses.
- *Note:* When volunteers send emails to team volunteers, it is requested that the main recipient be the sending volunteer, and all other volunteers' email addresses be placed in the "BCC" line to protect accidental dissemination of confidential email addresses.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media networks like Facebook can be highly effective in disseminating information to the community. However, much information held by CERT volunteers is confidential in nature and relates to sensitive information. Information that is considered sensitive would include the exact location of CERT response and facilities; the names or identifiers for victims or other CERT volunteers; the specific details of any assignment; the specific results of any missions; and anything else related to an individual or family CERT has helped, or an operation where CERT has been a participant. Disclosure of this information may violate confidentiality laws, it may endanger CERT responders, or it may disclose information protected by other rules and laws.

Social Media will be used ONLY by the team Coordinator or the EMA Director to convey information about the specific county CERT team as an effort to protect the confidential nature of what CERT does. Only the EMA directors or Coordinator and Deputy Coordinator are authorized to post pictures on social media without the supervisor consent and approval.

If a volunteer wants to suggest that information be posted on social media, he/she should contact the team Coordinator with the suggestion. The decision to post or not post information as requested will be made by the Coordinator and the EMA Director, and their decision is final.

Under no circumstances, shall any CERT volunteer disclose the identity of another volunteer, of a victim, or another responder in social media. Doing so may result in dismissal from NCCERT.

External Communication

During an activation or disaster, only the EMA directors, Coordinator, Deputy Coordinator, and designated Public Information Officer (PIO) are authorized to speak with the media. NCCERT volunteers are instructed to refer press inquiries to their supervisor, who will direct them to the PIO, rather than providing any opinions or information for the public. There may be times when the press or other media want to interview NCCERT volunteers on site. In this case, the Coordinator or EMA Director will make arrangements for the volunteer to be interviewed, and will communicate directly to that volunteer that their participation is endorsed. Volunteers may refuse to be interviewed at any time without retribution or question.

Volunteers are expected to follow the designated chain-of-command when communicating with leadership and command during an incident.

Dress Code

NCCERT volunteers are expected to dress appropriately for all team activities. When participating in activations and community service events, volunteers are expected have their CERT identification badge openly displayed. Logo t-shirts, sweatshirts and other apparel items may be available for purchase at the volunteer's own expense. When available, designated team shirts should be worn with jeans, khaki or black pants or shorts. Black or khaki BDUs are allowed; camouflage-wear is not permitted.

Shirts provided may include dark green standardized "CERT" garb purchased in large quantities through past grant programs. It can also include logo items that are purchased individually with NCCERT logo on them and supplied by a local vendor. Apparel items are available to members as funding exists to provide them; members may purchase their own items to be worn as this Handbook outlines.

Volunteers shall NOT wear identification wear from other first responder groups and departments during deployment unless the deployment is officially a joint effort of both organizations. Fire department or police department wear, military wear, or other garments associated with other groups is not appropriate unless the joint organizations have activated the team.

Under NO circumstances shall any volunteer possess a weapon or weapons while involved in NCCERT activities, including training, events, or deployments. Any volunteer found in possession of a weapon during a sanctioned NCCERT activity of any kind will be dismissed from the team on site.

Whenever volunteers are in uniform, they must be mindful that they are representing not only the local team but the national Community Corps system, Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County EMA, and themselves. Volunteers may be disciplined for use of inappropriate language, vulgarity, gestures, or other unprofessional actions.

Safety vests or outerwear may be available to volunteers for use as appropriate during activations, and shall be utilized when provided. Volunteers may be required to provide their own outerwear and protective items; team items are provided as grant funds allow. Volunteers are also required to carry their NCCERTC-issued ID and Government-issued ID (Ohio Operator's License) on all activations. Appropriate shoes or boots, hats and coats should be worn as necessary. Volunteers should also wear appropriate protections such as sun block, sunglasses, etc. NCCERT does not provide outerwear or all protective gear for its volunteers; volunteers are required to maintain their own health and safety as a first responder. NCCERT is not responsible for lack of appropriate clothing or gear under austere or emergency conditions.

Equipment

Depending on the activity, volunteers should have access to personal equipment for use in activations. Volunteers may be required to use and care for team supplies and equipment while activated. Volunteers should use accountability forms for team-issued supplies and equipment, and should check for damage and function prior to use and after use, just prior to turning it back in.

Any personally owned equipment or supplies used by the volunteer during training or deployment is the sole responsibility of the volunteer. NCCERT will not assume responsibility for any items brought by a person affiliated with the team, or unaffiliated. For example, volunteers may bring chain saws and yard tools to use in the course of responding; those items are the responsibility of the owner only, and NCCERT assumes NO responsibility to pay for, repair, or recondition any item used. NCCERT is also NOT responsible for any injury caused to persons or property in the course of using this tool, for an assigned job or an alternate purpose.

General Activities

Volunteers are encouraged to wear a NCCERT logo shirt to instantly identify them as an NCCERT volunteer at events and activities involving other agencies and/or the general public. This t-shirt may be provided by Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County or may be purchased by individuals under the guidance of team management from an approved vendor. While individuals may purchase their own clothing and miscellaneous items, the logo set up and embroidery set up at the selected vendor is established by the team and paid for by team funds. If the individuals choose to use an alternate vendor, they may have to pay set up and logo fees. General activities include community service, drills, presentations, and drills and exercises involving multiple agencies. It is acceptable to wear a turtleneck, additional t-shirt, or sweatshirt with the county issued t-shirt for warmth or comfort.

Activations

It is recommended that volunteers use the following team items supplied for rapid response, particularly at mass casualty scenes. The specific equipment needed will depend upon the specific situation.

- Go-Kit (supplied at the point of deployment by NCCERT)
 - Back pack
 - Safety vest
 - Work gloves
 - Flashlight and batteries
 - Eye protection
 - Basic first aid kit
 - Notebook and pen
- It is recommended that volunteers bring, at a minimum, the following personally provided items with them:
 - Sweatshirt, jacket, or appropriate outerwear
 - Bottled drinking water (16-20 oz.)
 - Snack bars
 - Personal medical supplies (i.e. diabetic supplies)
 - Appropriate shoes or boots

Discipline and Separation

Volunteering with NCCERT is a serious responsibility. If the responsibilities outlined in this handbook are not respected, it may be necessary for disciplinary action to take place.

Complaints should be directed to the Team Coordinator and/or EMA Director. If, after review of the complaint by the Coordinator or EMA Director, it is found that the volunteer violated the accepted standards of NCCERT, they will take appropriate action to resolve the issue through counseling, probation, retraining or dismissal.

The following are guidelines to be utilized by the Executive Committee when conferring on a disciplinary action:

- The volunteer may be requested to appear before the Executive Committee for a conference. Refusal or failure to attend this conference will result in automatic separation from NCCERT.
- The Executive Committee will determine if a written warning, counseling, retraining, probation or separation is appropriate.
- Written Warning: A written warning will be issued to the volunteer and a copy placed in the volunteer's permanent record.
- Probation: probation periods are issued for 90 days. Volunteers will not be eligible for activation or community service activities while on probation.
- Separation: If a volunteer has been placed on probation twice, he or she will be automatically dismissed from the organization upon a third offense. Separation can also be ordered for volunteers committing serious infractions of team policies.

A non-comprehensive list of infractions subject to automatic dismissal includes:

- Criminal acts
- Insubordination
- Failure to follow the order of a supervisor
- Negligence
- Theft
- Destruction of Property
- Slander
- Unprofessional behavior
- Harm or threat of harm to another person
- Attendance at team events while under the influence of drugs, alcohol or illegal substances
- Possession of a firearm or other weapon at an NCCERT activity or deployment

The Executive Committee will formalize the separation with a formal letter and make arrangements for an exit interview and return of any NCCERT materials.

Activation Process

Mass casualty emergencies and disasters that endanger life and property require immediate response of public safety professionals. It is not the mission of NCCERT to provide public safety services. NCCERT may, however, support the response of public safety agencies by providing logistical support and service. NCCERT may fill gaps in capacity at the request of the EMA to assist with operations at the ICP, EOC or JIC.

There are four fundamental rules for activating the Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County CERT.

1. The sole method of activation is through the Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County EMA. The EMA Director or designee will contact the Unit Director to begin the activation process, or if the Coordinator receives the request for activation, he/she will contact the EMA Director for deployment approval.
2. Volunteers shall not self-deploy. Doing so could be grounds for dismissal.
3. No unauthorized person has the authority to deploy any individual volunteer directly.
4. NCCERT is not responsible for any actions taken should a volunteer deploy without approval of the EMA Director.

It is crucial that the activation process work through team leadership. This method of utilizing a single point of contact ensures that:

- The activation request is appropriate for the unit
- Notifications are made through the most effective channels
- Responses from volunteers are tracked efficiently, with no duplication
- The appropriate number and type of volunteers are dispatched
- Appropriate interagency collaboration is exercised

- Volunteers are assigned at their optimum skill level and preferences
- Teams of various specialties can be allocated as needed
- Groups of volunteers who trained together can offer maximum effectiveness
- Resources are allocated wisely in case of multiple requests
- Volunteers are provided with the relevant background and directions
- Responders will arrive with the appropriate training and equipment
- Volunteer safety is ensured to the greatest degree possible
- Activities of responders can be monitored across multiple events
- After action reporting and feedback mechanisms are maintained
- Follow-ups are initiated as appropriate

Self-deployment and the contacting of individual volunteers apart from the established channels interfere with these desired outcomes. Volunteers shall not respond based upon improper notification but should report such instances immediately to team leadership. When team leadership confirms that the activation and mobilization process will begin. Team volunteers are expected to respond according to directives in the notification whether or not they can deploy. A system of total accountability is established at the onset of a response, and without adequate feedback from volunteers, it is impossible to insure the adequate staffing and conduct of the mission assigned. Volunteers are to view activations with the utmost urgency and importance.

Volunteers shall deploy to the site identified, and may travel to the incident as a group. There may be a pre-deployment informational or organizational meeting at a location established by the Coordinator. Volunteers should view the pre-deployment meeting with urgency and importance.

Deployment assignments may take volunteers to a site managed by another response agency, such as a Red Cross shelter or a Salvation Army feeding station, or a disaster scene managed through the Incident Command System. Individuals are to report to the assigned site and follow the command of the assigned supervisor. The supervisor may not be an EMA or CERT supervisor; if this is the case, CERT volunteers are to follow the command of this person regarding assigned duties. Volunteers will be informed of the supervisor to whom to report upon deployment.

Overview of Activities

The type of disaster determines the specific requirements of each activation.

Whether volunteers are needed for a *single site* or *multiple sites* depends on the scope of the emergency. For example, volunteers could be assigned to:

- A single staging area if there is a localized incident.
- To various sites if damage occurs in more than one location in the county.
- To sites that provide logistical support and service to operations.

The type of event impacts the *method of activation* to be used in each situation.

- A phone tree and/or email is the most appropriate means of contacting volunteers to serve at pre-scheduled and planned events.
- Automated systems (Ohio Responds, Everbridge) would be utilized for large-scale activations, particularly when multiple communities and services are involved.

The *chain of contact* for the unit always begins with the Unit Coordinator.

- Designees would be pre-appointed to serve as alternate contacts in case the director and/or coordinator are unavailable or absent during an emergency.
- The coordinator (with team leaders as back up) would carry out notifications and other disaster activities as instructed by the director or designee.

Reporting and *coordination with other agencies* is part of any response.

- The requesting agency would be responsible for ensuring that all appropriate parties are called as needed (building inspectors, highway department, police, fire, American Red Cross, other).
- Incident Command must assess the scope of the disaster, identify necessary resources, and address safety issues before requesting NCCERT through the EMA.
- The Unit Director would request that the appropriate number and type of volunteer response takes place on behalf of the unit.
- If the disaster occurs outside Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County, the director would determine whether response outside the area is appropriate. She will ask whether volunteers are willing to respond beyond their usual service area, factoring in any reciprocity issues.
- Volunteers would arrive at a specified location with the appropriate ID and equipment. They would interact with other participants as specified by local protocols and operate within the scope of their training.
- Procedures for checking in and out, completing forms and reports, and other mechanisms for accountability would be specified by the requesting agency and adhered to by volunteers.
- The situation must be monitored so staffing can scale up or down as needed and shift assignments can be adjusted.
- The director would ensure that deactivation of the unit as a whole is carried out effectively and that after-action reports and recognition of volunteers takes place in a timely manner.

Sources of requests for NCCERT response can include local, regional, state and federal agencies. The Incident Commander for the event would assess the scope of the disaster and activate or place a request for the necessary responders according to their local emergency operations plan.

NCCERT would be available as one of the responding entities, working closely with emergency management, public health, police, fire, EMS, Red Cross and other agencies as needed. Collectively, these responding agencies would take direction from the Incident Commander or through a Unified Command, as specified in NIMS and ICS.

Types of Activation

Volunteers can be activated in local, regional, statewide, or national disasters, both in small and large scale disasters.

Local Activation

As soon as a possible incident is suspected, the local authority is advised to contact the Coordinator for a pre-notification. This allows the Coordinator to prepare initial response mechanisms: contacting the other team leaders, gathering paperwork, arranging for contingencies, and issuing standby requests.

- If it is determined that NCCERT is not required, the volunteers are not activated. **Note:** It is *never* a problem if we are contacted but not activated. It is better to provide advance notice and discover we're not needed than to hold off until the last possible moment, giving the unit minimal time to prepare for activation.
- If NCCERT is requested, the next step is to determine the appropriate response from within unit ranks. Depending on the emergency, some volunteers may have "first call" to another entity, so those circumstances will be factored in early.
- If specialists are required (such as nurses, paramedics, veterinarians, etc.), they would be called immediately.
- If a limited number of volunteers are needed, the notifications would cease as soon as that number was reached.

Large Scale Activation

An incident that results in a mass casualty incident or requires a response over multiple operational periods constitutes a large-scale activation.

- If large scale activation is required, all active volunteers will be notified through Ohio Responds or the local notification system.
- The Unit Coordinator and Team Leaders will be responsible for scheduling volunteers to work over an activation spanning multiple operational periods.

State/National Activation

These disasters can result in requests for volunteers from other CERT units. All requests of this nature will be routed through the Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County EMA Director and Coordinator who will determine if it is appropriate to request response from volunteers and which volunteers are best suited for the activation outside of the Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County region. Such response may raise issues of greater complexity, such as recognition of licenses and intra-state procedures.

It is imperative that the Coordinator determine whether to contact volunteers for deployment outside the region. Having this single point of decision ensures coverage in the local area, should the emergency put Erie, Huron, and Ottawa County at risk. Also, the Coordinator would have records indicating each volunteer's abilities, interests, and preferences for responding to disasters at a given location.

Unit Responsibilities in a Deployment

The Incident Commander or designee would determine whether NCCERT responders would report to a labor pool, staging area, hospital or other location. Prior to departure to such site, NCCERT will report to an identified collecting point for travel as a group, and for initial sing-in. The ICS role includes tracking and monitoring response from all entities, including CERT.

Coordinator Responsibilities

When a call is received for NCCERT assistance from the EMA Director, the Coordinator is responsible for the following:

- Initiating procedures to ensure that the appropriate number and type of volunteers are activated at the necessary skill levels.
- Ensuring that volunteers respond to the appropriate locations (such as predetermined staging areas) with the appropriate gear and instructions.
- Maximizing each volunteer's personal safety: decontamination, hazmat, and other threats on scene are identified and planned for; volunteers are trained to operate safely in that environment; recognizing and avoiding undue risk.
- Monitoring responses and staffing levels with direction from the Incident Commander.
- Maintaining contact with volunteers and monitoring their involvement as needed.
- Verifying that reporting and deactivation procedures are followed.
- Verify transportation of volunteers to and from the correct sites.
- Engage team volunteers as appropriate.
- Issue badges and distribute uniforms for ID.
- Ensure that supplemental equipment is provided.
- Keep tabs on changes in the situation.
- Check on safety issues as needed.
- Verify that volunteers are dispatched with the appropriate ID (badge, driver's license, etc.)
- Schedule volunteers in shifts for events of long-term duration.

Volunteer Responsibilities

According to ICS procedures, volunteers should respond according to the following checklist:

- Receive an assignment from the EMA Director or Coordinator. This should include, at a minimum, reporting location and time, length of assignment, brief description of role, route information, and a designate communications link if necessary.
- Bring any specialized supplies or equipment required for the job. Be sure you have adequate personal supplies to last for the duration of the assignment.
- Sign in upon arrival at the check in location for the given assignment.
- Use clear text during any radio communications. Refer to incident facilities by incident names. Refer to personnel by ICS title, not by numeric code or name.
- Obtain a briefing from your immediate supervisor. Be sure to understand your assignment.
- Acquire necessary work materials, then locate and set up your work station.

- Organize and brief any subordinates assigned to you.
- Brief your relief at the end of your shift and when you are demobilized from the incident.
- Complete required forms and reports, delivering them to your supervisor or the Documentation Unit before you leave.
- Demobilize according to the plan.

Demobilization and Debriefing

Demobilization of incidents should include a Hot Wash to provide volunteers with an opportunity to provide feedback about the response. The Hot Wash should be scheduled as closely following the conclusion of the event as is reasonable and possible, preferably within 48 hours of demobilization.

The Hot Wash should be followed by an After Action Conference where team leadership can share with the volunteers a summary of the event, lessons learned and any changes made to policies, procedures or training for the future. The information contained in the After Action Report will be provided to the EMA, Incident Commanders, State MRC Coordinator, and others as appropriate for the incident.

Incidents may require follow up with critical incident stress management teams. The Coordinator and EMA Director will establish this process with a competent mental health professional and will provide the opportunity for defusing and debriefing to team volunteers. Any team volunteer who feels the need for mental health services after a deployment is responsible for bringing that need to the attention of the EMA Director or the team Coordinator. Volunteers will be provided with assistance in areas of mental health following the CISM established process. Individual mental health services may be considered when the volunteer, the EMA Director, and the team Coordinator deem it necessary.

Adoption

This Community Corps Community Emergency Response Team Handbook was reviewed and adopted on the _____ day of _____, 2012.

Emergency Management Agency Director _____
Date

CERT Team Coordinator _____
Date

Citizen Corps Council Chairman _____
Date

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

NCCERT performs many duties at the request of the EMA director(s). The Coordinator is charged with implementing the directives of the request according to procedures that are standardized to the degree possible. It must be understood that disaster and emergency situations are each one unique and bring with them a set of goals, challenges, and barriers unlike any other incident. The Coordinator, therefore, has the latitude to make necessary changes in procedures for the purpose of life safety, incident stabilization, and property conservation.

The Coordinator acts in the interest of safety of the NCCERT members, as well as in the interest of achieving the goals established by the EMA. When a request is made, the EMA Director and the Coordinator will decide to either accept or not accept the request based upon team capability, situational assessment, and incident priorities. This decision will be conveyed to the Incident Commander by the EMA Director or Coordinator.

The NCCERT prepares and trains to deliver a specific set of tasks, but, as set forth in the purpose and goal of the team, may accept duties outside those capabilities at the direction of the county EMA Director. The duties the NCCERT prepares to deliver on a regular basis are described in the following pages.

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

There are two forms of damage assessment and both are intended to be done within 12 hours of impact of a disaster. FEMA Damage Assessment is intended to provide a windshield view of overall damages for the purpose of establishing incident resource priorities and to determine disaster declaration status. A course provided under the guidance of the Ohio EMA and the county EMA offices is used as training for this job, and federal, state, or local certificates of completion can be offered. This can be done as rapid on-the-job training immediately upon need as well. There is also a FEMA Independent Study course in Preliminary Damage Assessment at the EMI online portal of courses.

American Red Cross Damage Assessment provides the basis for ARC Family Assistance and Mass Care needs. Training is available online and face-to-face, both through the local Red Cross representatives.

Damage Assessment Procedure

1. EMA Director, in conjunction with ARC and other officials, determines that damage assessment is necessary, and establishes initial time frames and personnel need.
2. NCCERT Coordinator is contacted for assistance by either EMA.
3. NCCERT Coordinator establishes number of teams and personnel, sets work shift times and locations, gathers DA paperwork and supplies, and activates team per activation procedures.

4. Pre-deployment briefing is held at staging location, and review of standards is done as needed. A safety briefing is done to include scene safety, driving safety, and personal safety. Any unique or dangerous conditions known to the Coordinator are communicated to team members.
5. Team members will sign in upon arrival and out upon departure from the DA job. The Coordinator will supply a sign in/out sheet.
6. Teams are organized and deployed in teams of 2-4 or as logically and safely necessary; workers are not sent by themselves to do damage assessment.
7. Team members who do not have identification badges, are not in good standing with the team, are ill or injured, or are otherwise unfit for this work will not be deployed.
8. Team members are to show up appropriately dressed for the task at hand. If inappropriately dressed, they may be refused assignment. Team ID Badges should be worn, and a state ID such as a driver's license should be in the member's possession.
9. Team members are prohibited from advocating for or making known the paid services of any contractor, are it themselves or someone else, and they do not make any recommendations for hired or volunteer work for property owners whose property they assess.
10. Teams are to check in with the Coordinator by cell phone or telephone periodically, as addressed in the safety briefing.
11. Teams are to follow all safety directives at all times; they are to obey all traffic laws and other laws in the course of their work; if a property owner orders them to leave their property, they shall immediately leave the property and document the situation.
12. Team members will use sidewalks and driveways whenever possible, and will make an effort to identify themselves to the property owner upon arrival on the property. Drivers will not park in yards or lawns if any other parking location exists and will make every effort to avoid damage to grass or other property when parking.
13. Team members are to appropriately and completely fill out all DA paperwork and turn it in immediately to the reporting station at the EMA location.
14. Team members must ask property owners for permission before taking any pictures of damages for any intent other than to document damages. Pictures taken are not intended for any kind of publication without the permission of the owner.
15. Upon completion of the damage assessment and having turned in all appropriate paperwork, personnel will check out per the directions of the Coordinator.
16. Team members will report any injuries to themselves or damage to property, either theirs or that of any other assessed property, to the Coordinator no later than check out. If any incident causes the summoning of public safety services at a property or between properties, the team member is to call the Coordinator immediately.
17. Team members are to act in a safe manner at all times, and are required to refuse any assignment that they feel they are unqualified to perform or that puts them at significant risk of injury or loss of life. They are not to do anything that would endanger themselves or those around them, including other team members.
18. Any questions or concerns are to be reported to the Coordinator and/or the EMA Director if the Coordinator is unavailable or unable to respond.

DEBRIS REMOVAL/CLEAN UP

After storms of various kinds, NCCERT can assist residents in cleaning debris from their outdoor property, and can assist municipalities, townships, and counties with public properties that need disaster-related clean up. This debris removal includes picking up lawn debris, limbs and branches, and other items that have blown into or been dropped into their yards, and taking it to boulevards or other collecting points. Only when approved by the EMA Director or Coordinator should NCCERT members haul debris to landfills or other collection points. NCCERT does not enter homes or outbuildings for cleanup unless the EMA Director has established that work as part of the mission. Unless otherwise instructed, NCCERT debris clean up service is limited to the out-of-doors areas of properties. Unless approved by the EMA Director and Coordinator, NCCERT members will not use handsaws, chainsaws, and other hand tools in the course of debris clean up.

Debris Clean Up Procedure

1. The EMA Director and Coordinator will discuss and identify the area needing help, obtain the approval of the authority having jurisdiction for that area, and establish the work period and target area for the work period.
2. The Coordinator will activate the team as appropriate per procedures.
3. Workers will respond to activation procedures in a timely fashion and will indicate where and how they are available to the Coordinator. They are to make any physical or other limitations known to the Coordinator that may in any way affect their ability to safely and competently perform cleanup duties.
4. A pre-deployment briefing may be held close to the work site, or may be done at individual work sites if more appropriate. NCCERT workers are to prioritize safety of themselves and their co-workers at all times, travelling to and from work sites as well as when on a specific work site.
5. Workers are to be deployed in teams of 2 or more. At no time should a NCCERT volunteer work alone on a cleanup site.
6. Workers are to wear identifying shirts when possible, as well as have team ID badges with them. Reflective vests, gloves, safety goggles may be supplied by NCCERT, but if not, workers are to supply their own safety garb. Workers are not authorized to work without reflective wear of some sort, gloves, goggles, and appropriate footwear. In bright sun or hot weather, sunscreen and water should be used.
7. Work sites may be identified by phone call to the Coordinator, and sites may be assigned to individual teams.
8. When workers report to the work site, they are to sign in on a sign in sheet supplied by the Coordinator, and sign out on completion. If workers report individually to a site, they are to call the Coordinator upon arrival and call again when leaving the site so the Coordinator can record times for them.
9. Workers are to drag or carry debris to a collection point. They are not to use lawn tractors and other motorized equipment owned by the property owner. They may use wagons, rakes and brooms, tarps, and other supply items with the permission of the owner of such items. NCCERT will allow workers to use any supplies the team has on

hand but does not guarantee that any specific items will be available. Members are not permitted to take their own motorized equipment to the site but may use their own lawn tools at their own risk.

10. Workers are to report any injury or incident involving property damage to the Coordinator immediately. NCCERT is not responsible for damage to property in the course of cleanup, and workers are required to conduct operations in a safe way amid debris and damaged structures. If a member is uncomfortable with a job, they are asked not to perform that task.
11. There is no specific training for debris cleanup, but the topic and safety concerns are discussed at regular training meetings and in other courses.

TRAFFIC CONTROL ASSISTANCE

NCCERT provides additional manpower to help with traffic and pedestrian safety when requested by local law enforcement, facility owners, or organizations coordinating community events. They work much as a "Safety Patrol" would work in school zone. NCCERT will provide limited assistance in the form of standing near barricades to warn drivers of closures; standing beside roadways or near intersections to make drivers aware of runners and other roadway activities in progress; assisting in the parking and ingress/egress of vehicles to a parking lot for a large event or incident; or to assist in managing vehicle movement on private property during a special or large event. NCCERT does not provide intersection control, detour control, or other kinds of traffic control typically provided by a uniformed officer of the law. NCCERT traffic assistance personnel have no legal authority to detain or direct, and function at the cooperation of vehicle operators. When possible, NCCERT functions in conjunction with a local law enforcement department as supplementary personnel to the department to enhance or improve safety.

Traffic Control Assistance Procedures

1. A request for assistance is received by the EMA Director or Coordinator, and approved by the EMA Director.
2. Teams are scheduled by the appropriate activation method. For community events, this may be done by email months ahead of time; for emergencies, this can be done through the emergency activation procedure.
3. Workers are to report to the assigned site at the assigned time. A sign in sheet will be provided for sign in and sign out.
4. Workers will wear their NCCERT ID badge, a CERT t-shirt is preferred, and they must wear a reflective safety vest supplied most times by the team. They may have a large mag-lite flashlight, parking flags, and/or parking cones to use in the course of the task when appropriate.
5. Workers are to wear weather-appropriate gear and be prepared to work no less than 2 hours at their job site. They should wear comfortable and appropriate shoes and socks, taking into consideration the work site.
6. Workers are to take direction from local law enforcement when on roadways and streets.

7. Safety is of paramount importance, and workers are not permitted to become confrontational or aggressive toward drivers, even if antagonized. Workers should have a note pad and pen to record any license plate numbers of vehicles that warrant report to officials.
8. Workers should never put their own safety at risk in the course of work.
9. Training is provided at regularly scheduled team meetings or in special sessions based upon an assignment. On-the-job training may be provided if the need for assistance is immediate and unscheduled. Training is provided, whenever possible, by a local law enforcement professional.
10. Workers who help with traffic assistance must have either completed the team training at least once, or must have job experience in providing traffic assistance (former LE official, fire professional, highway professional, military experience, etc.)
11. The Coordinator or EMA Director has the authority to suspend operations at any time the situation becomes unsafe for workers, conditions become severe, or insufficient personnel exists to provide the service.

SHELTERING/MASS CARE ASSISTANCE

NCCERT provides back up personnel and support assistance to American Red Cross when evacuations or other sheltering needs are present.

For any workers who want to assist in the domiciliary of a shelter operation, they are required to successfully complete American Red Cross Shelter Fundamentals training which includes submitting to a background check by American Red Cross. They are required to enter themselves into the electronic volunteer management system maintained by American Red Cross, and their performance and participation is supervised by American Red Cross personnel. They are activated by calling the NCCERT Coordinator and deploying them to a specific location established by the American Red Cross.

For assistance outside the domiciliary section of a shelter, for example in the parking lot outside or in a registration area separate from a domiciliary area, NCCERT may be deployed for assistance under a mutual aid understanding between ARC and NCCERT. In such cases, NCCERT volunteers may assist in parking cars in a parking lot, helping maintain the exterior of the shelter in a safe condition by shoveling sidewalks or escorting people to the door, or other activities not associated with the living area of the shelter.

NCCERT may assist with a pet shelter where cats and dogs are taken for sheltering. When an animal section of a shelter exists, there must be at least one NCCERT member who has successfully completed Animal Response I and II present if NCCERT is in charge of the shelter. NCCERT may also assist an animal response group or other animal authorities in managing a shelter.

NCCERT is responsible for providing assistance to Erie County EMA if a nuclear disaster requires evacuation and residents are sent to Sandusky High School and Perkins High School. NCCERT is

tasked under the Erie County Davis Besse Nuclear Emergency Plan to register evacuees at Sandusky High School Reception Center and to participate in drills and exercises for same. NCCERT may also be asked by American Red Cross to assist with operation of the shelter at Perkins High School.

NCCERT may be asked by American Red Cross or The Salvation Army to assist with mass feeding operations. When doing so, NCCERT volunteers work at the direction of the operation supervisor.

NCCERT may be asked by American Red Cross, The Salvation Army, or a jurisdiction to assist with a cooling/warming/respice center for the comfort and convenience of incident victims. The Coordinator will assign appropriate individuals with the background and training to perform the requested tasks to these joint venture operations as needed. The Coordinator and the EMA Director will collaborate on establishing suitable job duties for NCCERT volunteers.

The Coordinator will establish and maintain check-in and sign-out records for volunteers who help with any of these sheltering or care situations. NCCERT is activated by calling the Coordinator who obtains approval of the EMA Director for these situations.

VOLUNTEER AND DONATIONS MANAGEMENT

NCCERT members are encouraged to complete training in Volunteer Reception Center Management as taught by the Ohio EMA. NCCERT provides this training in-house through local instructors, or this may be taken from another similar program.

NCCERT will establish and operate a Volunteer Reception Center (VRC), either on site or remotely, for the purpose of registering and organizing volunteers who are affiliated with response organizations as well as those who are considered “spontaneous” and not affiliated with any specific group. The EMA Director will appoint a VRC Manager at his discretion, and that person will be responsible to him for operation of the VRC. This VRC is operated jointly with NCCERT, the county EMA, United Way/United Fund, the county department of job services, and/or 2-1-1 services. The VRC is located at a site established by the EMA Director, and roles and responsibilities are assigned according to availability of trained personnel. Untrained personnel may function in support roles during these operations.

Donations management for non-cash donations can be done in proximity to the VRC, and is done jointly with the same organizations. The EMA Director will appoint a Manager of the Donations Center chosen at his discretion, and that person will be responsible to him for operation of the Donation Center. When donations are received, every effort will be made to obtain the name, address, and other contact information of the donor and a description and estimated value of the donated goods. Every effort will be made to reasonably and logically sort and organize the donated goods for distribution to known disaster victims. Every attempt will be made to recognize and thank each donor, either upon delivery of the goods to the Donations Center, or by mail at a later date.

Each person who arrives at the Donation Center for distribution of goods will sign in and provide contact information. Anyone who is reasonably believed to be a valid victim of the disaster will be allowed to receive goods in a reasonable fashion. If a person is unknown and their affiliation with the disaster is questioned, they may be required to provide proof of residence or casualty due to the recent incident.

All VRC and DC records will be provided to the EMA director daily and/or at the close of operations. The records will include sign-in and sign-out of any and all volunteers who worked at the location.

FIRST AID STATIONS/AID STATIONS

NCCERT will provide personnel for a standard first aid station at a festival or community event, or at a disaster scene for supplemental assistance to EMS. NCCERT members, regardless of personal professional credentials, provide only basic first aid as outlined in the Emergency Care and Safety Institute "Standard First Aid, CPR, and AED" course. ECSI training materials are based upon current standard medical practice and the Emergency Cardiac Care Committee of the American Heart Association recommendations. The scope of first aid includes the following:

1. Providing CPR according to ECSI training standards.
2. Providing airway obstruction assistance according to ECSI training standards.
3. Using an AED if available according to the standards set by and taught through ECSI.
4. Providing first aid for minor bleeding or wounds, limited to cleansing and bandaging the wound and referring the person to EMS or the hospital for additional care as needed.
5. Providing assistance to victims who are ill including helping them lay down or avoid falling and injuring themselves, covering them, summoning additional assistance, and providing help to EMS in patient packaging.
6. Providing assistance to victims of traumatic injury at the scene of an incident or event as part of NCCERT response or support operations.
7. Assisting EMS with minor first aid help, CPR, or patient stabilization.
8. A log of care administered is maintained for every first aid station.

A NCCERT First Aid Station can be established by requesting a station through the Coordinator who obtains approval of the EMA Director. There must be established times and locations for the station. NCCERT does not provide anything beyond basic first aid, does not transport or assist with transport of patients, and does not operate under the delegated authority of a medical director. NCCERT functions as volunteer first aiders covered by Ohio volunteer liability and immunity laws.

NCCERT First Aid Stations are not provided in lieu of EMS presence, but to supplement EMS services. EMS services are always recognized as the higher-level care and patients are always turned over to EMS when necessary. Life threatening injury or illness will always result in calling EMS to the location and turning the patient over to them as soon as possible.

Any volunteer who works at a First Aid Station must either have taken and be currently certified or be currently certified as an instructor in ECSI Standard First Aid, CPR, and AED or an equivalent program.

NCCERT will provide an aid station for triathlons and other athletic events. At this aid station, NCCERT volunteers distribute food and beverage items provided by the event sponsors to participants in a manner established by the event sponsor.

SUPPORT TO OTHER AGENCIES

The specific jobs necessary at any disaster or community event are unique. NCCERT strives to help in a way that fills gaps in capacity and capability. Therefore, NCCERT may, at times and upon request, provide supplemental personnel to assist the EMA or other agency as needed. This assistance may include providing scribes, call takers, and office workers; providing on-the-job training in specific areas when a volunteer's capabilities match the need for expertise; providing personnel to assist with monitoring of social media, public information assistance, or liaison officers to assist in the coordination of response.

NCCERT volunteers may provide assistance to specific departments of jurisdictions when needed. This can include call taking, facility manning, errand running, and other incidental tasks. NCCERT members are not authorized to operate motor vehicles or emergency vehicles in the course of this assistance.

NCCERT volunteers operate within their own individual capabilities and capacity when assisting other organizations. Each person is unique, and it is the responsibility of each one to know their limitations and strengths. Each person is responsible for his/her own safety and wellbeing before, during, and after response. Any injuries or illnesses associated with response or training is to be reported immediately to the Coordinator who will document the facts in the volunteer's file.