



Polk County Emergency Management Agency

Community Emergency Response Team

Standard Operating Guidelines

2023

POLK COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY - CERT

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1. Overview & Mission

1.1. Abbreviations & Definitions

CERT: Abbreviation for Community Emergency Response Team

Chain of Command: An orderly line that details how authority flows through the hierarchy of the organization and the incident management system.

Concept of Operations: A plan that describes the organization, mission, and objectives of a system or program.

Deployment: The action of bringing resources into effective action.

Disaster: An occurrence of a natural catastrophe, technological accident, or human-caused event that has resulted in severe property damage, deaths, and/or multiple injuries.

EMA Director: Person designated with the responsibility for managing and directing the Polk County Emergency Management Agency.

EMA Coordinator: Designee of the EMA Director who is responsible for providing specialized support for the county's fire and emergency management functions.

Emergency Management Officials: Emergency Management Officials include the EMA Director, EMA Coordinator, GEMA Field Coordinator, GEMA Homeland Security Coordinator, or director, deputy director, or coordinator of another agency.

EOC: Abbreviation for Emergency Operations Center.

Freelancing: Working for separately outside the command, control, and direction of Polk County CERT. Also referred to as self-deployment.

Hazard: Something that is potentially dangerous or harmful, often the root cause of an unwanted outcome.

ICS: Abbreviation for Incident Command System.

NIMS: Abbreviation for National Incident Management System.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Clothing and equipment that is worn or used in order to provide protection against hazardous substances or environments.

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Public Safety Official: Any member or person who is a certified police officer, firefighter, or emergency medical technician.

Standard Operating Guideline: Guidelines for performing tasks that members have been trained to accomplish safely and effectively.

1.2. Introduction and Purpose

Polk County Emergency Management Agency (Polk EMA) recognizes that of a major all-hazard emergency or disaster within the borders of Polk County, there is a likelihood that most emergency management and public safety resources may be overwhelmed. That assistance from neighboring jurisdictions is probable; however not guaranteed. Due to this some resources within Polk County may need to be augmented to respond and recover from a disaster effectively. Therefore, the Polk County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program is the answer to the situation.

The Polk County CERT Program is part of the local and national Citizen Corps effort to incorporate and utilize volunteers in the community. Citizen Corps is endorsed by the President and the Department of Homeland Security. Polk County CERT members are trained in basic response techniques in order to assist local citizens and first responders in disaster or emergency situations.

The purpose of the Polk County CERT Standard Operating Guidelines is to:

- a) Outline the concept of operations organization.
- b) Specify procedures for CERT activation.
- c) Establish CERT training and equipment requirements.
- d) Define CERT team functions, capabilities, and limitations.

This helps to ensure an organized and efficient response to a large-scale emergency or disaster occurring in Polk County.

1.3. Mission

The mission of the Polk County CERT program is to rapidly respond as a team to assist local responders, communities, private agencies and/or state and federal agencies in a largescale emergency or disaster. Polk County CERT is designed to support first responders or Emergency Operations Center support functions.

Polk County CERT Mission Statement:

Polk County CERT members under the sponsorship of Polk County Emergency Management Agency will strive to provide residents and emergency responders a quality resource for safety education, hazard mitigation, emergency response assistance, and other volunteer efforts in order to build and sustain a culture of preparedness.

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1.4. Values

Polk County CERT identifies the following values that is vital for a successful CERT program:

1. **Professionalism** – Professionalism is the practice of being reliable, setting your own high standards, and showing that you care about every aspect of your job.
2. **Integrity** – Integrity is the practice of being honest and showing a consistent and uncompromising adherence to strong moral and ethical principles and values. As a member of Polk County CERT public trust is placed in all members therefore if it's of the highest importance that all members maintain their integrity.
3. **Compassion** – The results of a disaster or emergency can leave individuals and families vulnerable and at a loss. Compassion is important because it promotes meaningful connections, facilitates problem-solving, and improves health and wellbeing. Compassion, at its core, is about putting aside judgment and refusing to turn away from challenging situations.
4. **Service** – Service to all mankind is a hallmark value of Polk County CERT. Polk County CERT will provide service to all mankind we are called to help.

1.5. Goals

The goals of the CERT program are:

- a) To do the greatest good for the greatest amount of people.
- b) To maintain team readiness through ongoing training and meetings.
- c) To maintain professionalism in all areas within the scope of the program.
- d) To focus great effort in maintaining the safety, in ordered importance, of ourselves, team members, and all other victims or rescuers.

1.6. Objectives

The objectives of the CERT program are to establish and maintain teams of qualified and trained individuals who can execute the following:

- a) Augment local emergency services and emergency management officials with trained individuals.
- b) Assist law enforcement functions including traffic direction and security.
- c) Assist in victim triage and rescue.
- d) Assist with sheltering, mass feeding and other support function staffing.
- e) Integrate operations with other CERT teams as directed by other first responders.
- f) Provide communications capability with individual team members and coordinate communications with other CERT teams.

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1.7. Plan Update

This document will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary. Polk County Emergency Management Agency has the authority to make revisions as necessary and required.

2. Concept of Operations

2.1. General

The CERT program is a key component of Polk EMA. The teams are designed to aid emergency responders during a long-term incident. The teams are also capable of providing direct support to Polk County Government within the scope of emergency management support functions. The teams will consist of members that reside within Polk County.

2.2. Operation Responsibilities

The Polk EMA Director shall have overall authority and oversees the Polk County CERT Program.

The CERT program supports local incident commanders, local emergency responders and other agencies within Polk County.

Polk County CERT are neither designed or intended to serve as initial first responders on a scene but can provide additional resources as “second” responders if the event requires or it is requested in accordance of this SOG.

The CERT program enables the Incident Commander to utilize CERT teams in noncritical functions allowing first responders to be utilized in critical areas.

In a large-scale situation where the first response system is overwhelmed and or delayed, CERT members can aid in their homes, neighborhoods, and local communities until first responders arrive.

CERT Teams will consist of a Team Leader, two Assistant Team Leaders, and approximately 7 to 15 other team members. Each team will have members who are trained and physically able to perform specific duties.

These duties include but are not limited to the following:

- a) Injury assessment/Basic First Aid/Stop the Bleed/CPR;
- b) Light search and rescue;
- c) Communications;
- d) Supply/Logistics;
- e) Damage Assessment;
- f) EOC Operations;
- g) Support Incident Command Staff on incidents.

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2.3. Team Identification

It is essential that team members maintain a professional level in both emergency and nonemergency activations. Team members will be issued identification cards (ID Cards) for both identification and accountability purposes. When performing CERT functions, members must display appropriate identification.

2.4. Identification Cards

ID Cards will be worn on the outermost garment at all times. If the card is lost it will be the responsibility of the team member to notify Polk EMA for replacement prior to the participation in another event. Members will not be allowed to participate in any activation functions of the program without a proper ID.

Members may be asked at any time to identify themselves as a CERT team member. Certified CERT members will receive an official ID Card issued by Polk EMA. If a member is terminated or quits he or she is responsible for turning in ID Cards to Polk EMA. Any deliberate misuse of this credential may result in dismissal from the program.

No member of Polk County CERT will be allowed to carry or possess any badge that resembles that of a law enforcement officer, firefighter, EMT, EMA official, etc. unless certified. If caught doing so disciplinary actions will be taken.

2.5. Apparel

When working in the field members must wear the issued green CERT vest and hard hats at all times. Members will be permitted to remove hard hats if they are in a rehab station. Members need to dress for the conditions and should always wear pants and work boots.

During non-emergency situations, members need to wear either the issued CERT vest or other clothing containing the CERT logo. It is the responsibility of the member to maintain all garments in a presentable manner. Polk County CERT apparel will not be worn in any inappropriate locations, such as bars, parties, clubs, etc. When wearing CERT apparel, members must maintain a professional demeanor.

2.6. Signage/Markings

Members can display up to a 3" x 5" CERT sticker in the bottom corner of the rear or front window of their vehicle. If a member chooses to utilize any other form of CERT signage/markings on their vehicles, it will only be allowed during official CERT functions and it must be approved by the Polk EMA Director or designee. All driving laws must be followed when displaying CERT signage.

No member will be permitted to install and utilize lights of any color in their personal vehicle on any CERT activity. If a member is caught doing so disciplinary action will be taken.

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3. Team Organization

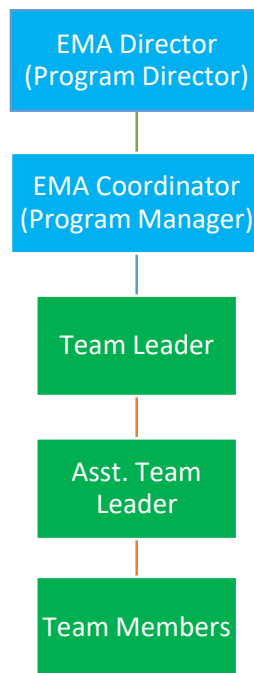
3.1. Purpose

The Polk EMA Director or designee is responsible for coordinating the CERT program direction, overseeing administrative functions, and ensuring interoperability with other CERTs, first responders, and emergency management support functions. The following tables show guidelines for the breakdown of command in emergency and non-emergency roles.

3.2. Locations

Teams may assist officials in other counties or jurisdictions if requested and approved by the Polk EMA Director or designee.

3.3. Team Organization & Position Descriptions



3.3.1. Program Director

The Program Director is the EMA Director of Polk County. The Director will have overall control and direction of the team.

3.3.2. Program Manager

The Program Manager is a member of Polk EMA tasked by the EMA Director for the management and supervision of the CERT program.

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3.3.3. Team Leader

Team Leaders are appointed by Polk County EMA. Instead of directing team members' work, team leaders facilitate team activities toward goal accomplishment. Team leaders are not ultimately responsible for their team's performance; however, they help their teams plan, learn to solve problems, and work effectively with each other. A team leader should enjoy coaching, working with people, and bringing about improvement through hands-off guidance and leadership.

During large-scale emergencies, CERT teams become an integral part of the command and control structure upon arrival at a staging area. The command and control staff of the affected jurisdiction must understand the role and training level of CERT teams when deploying them as a resource. The Team Leader will be the central point of coordination for the teams and will receive information from responsible parties.

The Team Leader will be an individual who has demonstrated through training, knowledge and experience that he/she is capable of leading the team before and during the stressful environment of a large-scale emergency or disaster. This individual will have the capability to manage and seek advice from a diverse group of people and ensure the team has an integrated approach during a critical incident. The Team Leader must possess knowledge of team functions, operations, and safety.

3.3.4. Assistant Team Leaders

Assistant Team Leaders provide necessary support for the Team Leader to manage and account for all team members. They follow the direction of the Team Leader and assume the roles he or she assigns to them. They assist Team Leaders in planning and coordination efforts. Assistant Leaders must be able to spontaneously step up to a Team Leader position in cases when the Team Leader is unavailable. This means the Assistant Team Leaders must be familiar with and fluent in all of the Team Leader's responsibilities. Assistant Team Leaders are appointed by the Team Leader in consultation with Polk County EMA.

3.3.5. Team Members

The CERT program is intended to provide a coordinated response for assisting first responders in large-scale emergency situations. Team members will maintain a level of training in order to effectively respond to a situation. Team members work under the direction of the Team Leader and/or Assistant Leaders. They help plan and carry out all team functions. Every team member is responsible for the actions of their team.

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4. Team Activation

4.1. Introduction

Polk County CERT may become involved in critical incidents at the direction of Polk EMA Director or designee.

4.2. Requests for Assistance

CERT teams can be activated for support in emergency or non-emergency situations. Request for CERT team assistance will be through the Polk EMA Director or designee. Procedures for authorization and notification are in place.

Emergency situations that CERT could be activated for include disasters, severe storms, damage assessments, missing persons, incidents that involve a local state of emergency, EOC Activations, etc.

Non-emergency situations include events such as parades, public forums, special events with large crowds, etc.

The Polk EMA Director or designee is responsible for the overall coordination of the development, maintenance and utilization of CERT in Polk County. During large-scale incidents, the site-specific Incident Commander and the EOC are organized to respond to and mitigate the consequences of incidents within our jurisdiction.

4.3. Activation

Upon authorization Polk County CERT will be activated either by telephones, cell phones, and/or other means. CERT Team Leaders will contact their team members.

CERT will activate when authorized by the Polk EMA Director or designee and if:

- a) Request by a local response agency
- b) Requested by a private response organization
- c) Polk EMA becomes aware of a situation that may warrant the assistance of CERT

4.4. Notification

Different levels of team activation are available depending on the magnitude of the incident and the specific type of incident. Polk EMA will keep CERT leadership apprised of the notification of a team. The following levels are utilized:

4.4.1. Alert

An alert is intended only to inform members of the potential for or the occurrence of an event. An alert does not constitute a directive to begin any response.

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4.4.2. Mobilization

If a CERT response/activation is required a members will notified of a request for mobilization. Members who can respond will then report to a staging area (*location determined by Polk EMA at the time of the event*) with all of their equipment for possible deployment. When responding to the staging area, ALL traffic laws will be obeyed! Polk EMA with the approval of the Incident Commander will initiate a response or cancellation of the mobilization.

4.4.3. Deployment

Unless directed otherwise, upon activation members of the CERT team will report to the staging area for briefing and deployment. Individual response to an incident is prohibited unless authorized by Polk EMA Director or designee.

Deploying CERT members will bring all necessary equipment and personal necessities for a 48 hour period.

Activated CERT members can be utilized to assist with basic scene or support functions including:

- a) Basic First Aid
- b) Triage of Victims
- c) Extinguishment of small incipient phase fires utilizing makeshift aids or fire extinguishers. (*NOTE – No interior firefighting is allowed and CERT members will not be in a position where smoke inhalation or heat endangers their safety*).
- d) Light Search and Rescue to include cribbing/leveraging and removal of patients from danger.
- e) Setting up treatment, rehab or similar sectors.
- f) Maintaining accountability for fellow CERT members. Supervising CERT sectors or groups.
- g) Any other operation required to remedy a given scenario that does not directly endanger the CERT members or move outside of their scope of practice.
- h) EOC Activations

NOTE: Many members of CERT may have skills beyond what is taught through the CERT program e.g. physicians and other health professionals, heavy equipment operators, etc. While these skills may be helpful during an emergency or disaster, they are outside the CERT scope of practice as a CERT member.

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4.4.4. Demobilization

When CERT services are no longer needed the demobilization process will begin. This includes of gathering any equipment deployed, assisting responders where necessary, returning equipment to normal, etc.

All team members will respond back to Polk EMA for debriefing and sign-out unless permission is given by a Team Leader or member of Polk County EMA. If any equipment was damaged during a deployment/activation it should be reported during this time as well as any injuries.

4.5. Cancellation

When an alert, mobilization, or deployment order has been issued and subsequent information indicates CERT is no longer required, a notice of cancellation will be issued.

4.6. Self-Deployment/Freelancing

Team members shall not self-deploy to an incident. Deployment will be as a team, or with a member of Polk County EMA. Assistance may be given to an injured person if the CERT member is qualified in first aid training through the American Heart Association and no first responder is available. The member may continue to assist the first responder(s) if requested or directed to do so by the responder. At no time should the CERT member place his/her self in a dangerous situation.

4.7. Weapons

CERT members are not permitted to carry or possess any weapons while undertaking activities as a CERT member unless authorized by the Incident Commander or Polk County EMA.

4.8. Fitness for Service

No CERT member will be deployed if they are under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal drugs. The use of legal drugs will be avoided during deployment if use could impact the safety of the CERT member or others. If a member feels they are not fit for service, they should notify their team leader or member of Polk County EMA.

5. Membership, Training and Exercising

5.1. Introduction

The Polk County CERT is intended to provide additional support resources in noncritical functions during large-scale situations and also provide non-emergency support functions during non-emergency situations. To be prepared to respond, members must maintain a minimal level of training.

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5.2. Membership Requirements

The basic intent in staffing the CERT program is the premise “There is a job for everyone.” This premise takes into consideration that the volunteer base will consist of individuals with varying levels of skills and physical capabilities. The key to success in the utilization of the Polk County CERT program is to match assignments with individual capabilities. There are no barriers in Polk County CERT on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, ethnic group or race, disability or religion.

All CERT members will meet the following requirements to become members of Polk County CERT:

- a) All members will be a minimum of 18 years old.
- b) Be of a character that can be trusted under adverse conditions were victims of disaster could be at disadvantage.
- c) No member will have any felony or misdemeanors of moral turpitude.
- d) All members will be a resident of Polk County.
- e) All members will complete the minimum training requirements set forth by Polk EMA.
- f) Be able to execute competencies taught during basic CERT training either independently or with support of a reliable accompanying assistant.

5.3. Training Guidelines

The CERT training program is based on maintaining a skill level to assist in the basic lifesaving efforts until the first response system is activated and an effective response is initiated. Personnel must also possess the knowledge required to accomplish this effectively without the threat of becoming secondary casualties.

5.3.1. Individual Training

Every month specific training topics for all CERT members will be scheduled. Members must attend 4/12 of these training sessions to maintain their membership in the program. These are normally conducted at the monthly CERT meeting. Additional specialized training will be periodically scheduled for individuals that may have specific interests.

5.3.2. Team Training and Meetings

Polk County CERT must conduct team training sufficient to ensure proficiency in the objectives of the team. Polk EMA is responsible for ensuring the team conducts their training in sufficient detail and frequency. It is recommended that team training occur at a minimum, every three months. It is anticipated that newly formed teams will need to train more often to obtain desired proficiency that may be required at an incident. This training can be held during team meetings.

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Some examples of the types of team training that are necessary will include first aid, triage, rescue, utility shutoff, use of personal protective equipment, and communications.

Each team should meet at least quarterly. Meetings should promote active discussion among members regarding news, events, policies, plans, and ideas or concepts. All members should strive to attend at least four team meetings per year.

5.3.3. Required Training

Due to our mission, Polk County CERT may respond and operate in several different environments and be responsible for numerous functions. All CERT members must receive an appropriate level of training necessary for their function. All members are required to complete all training courses as set forth in Section 5.3.4 of this SOG.

5.3.4. Basic CERT training

All team members are required to successfully complete the Community Emergency Response Team Volunteer Position Task Book in order to participate in field activations, deployment or call-outs, however they are still permitted to assist in the Emergency Operations Center while in training.

5.4 Advance CERT training

Advance training for CERT members will be conducted based on roles and responsibilities for positions within the team. Advance Training will be required and/or offered at the discretion of the Polk EMA Director or designee. For some positions there may be a Position Task Book that is required to be completed in order to serve in a specific capacity.

5.5. Continuing CERT training

Members must attend 1/3 of the monthly trainings to maintain their membership in the CERT program. (Note: Considerations will be granted for work, family emergencies, etc. at the discretion of Polk County EMA) Members must attend CERT Meetings, CERT Training Exercises and/or CERT refresher courses annually. Advance training set forth by Polk EMA is required to be completed annually to maintain their status for field response.

5.6. Leadership Training

All Team Leaders and Assistant Team Leaders will be required to complete the Community Emergency Response Team – Team Leader Position Task Book in order to serve in the capacity of a Team Leader.

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6. Equipment

6.1. Introduction

Equipping a CERT team is a significant commitment by Polk County EMA. Properly selected and maintained equipment is essential to insure the team is capable of responding to a major event.

6.2. Personnel Equipment

Each CERT member is issued equipment that he/she is responsible for. This equipment must be properly maintained and readily available for response to a situation. Members must bring equipment to the staging area. The equipment provided includes but not limited to:

- a) Backpack
- b) Flashlight
- c) Eye Protection
- d) Hard Hat
- e) Gloves
- f) First Aid Supplies
- g) CERT Vest
- h) Small Hand Tools

6.3. Equipment Accountability

Team leaders will inventory each member's equipment bag twice per year (January and July) and report to Polk County EMA. If equipment is missing or damaged, the Team Leader will address the issue with the team member.

If the member leaves the team, the equipment will be returned to Polk EMA within two weeks of notification. Unreturned equipment will be replaced at the previous member's expense.

7. Communications

7.1 Introduction

This section supports:

- a) Overall communications plan;
- b) Communication procedures for alerting, mobilizing and deploying teams;
- c) Communications between the EOC and/or Incident Commander and CERT;
- d) Communication between members and teams at the incident site;
- e) Communications terminology;
- f) General communications procedures;
- g) Reporting

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7.2. Available Communications

The following equipment and communication system resources are capable of being utilized for CERT communications.

- a) Telephone;
- b) Zello;
- c) In-house portable radio if available;
- d) Amateur Radio Communications.

7.3. Communications Terminology

7.3.1. Using common terminology and terms when communicating is essential using a common system. This system would utilize clear text and common language in both communications and call signs in order to:

- a) Function according to Incident Command Standards
- b) Facilitate communication of information at an incident scene
- c) Ease identification of different responsibilities
- d) Identify units by function and/or geographic assignment
- e) Identify all units in clear text

7.3.2. The following rules of communication will apply to CERT team operations:

- a) The use of "10" codes will not be used;
- b) Plain text will be used at all times;
- c) Conversations should be clear, concise and short to minimize tying up the talk-group or channel;
- d) The words "CODE RED" should be announced over the radio when scene is no longer under control or personnel are in immediate danger.

7.3.3. It is important when initiating a conversation on a radio system to first identify the unit being called by the unit calling.

7.3.4. The person initiating a conversation is responsible for announcing "clear" when he/she is through communicating on the radio. This will let others know that the conversation is completed and they may use the talk-group or frequency.

7.4. General Communications Procedures

Each team member will operate in the operational channel assigned at the incident.

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8. Miscellaneous and other Guidelines

8.1. Media and Public Speaking

At times, media outlets (including TV, newspaper, radio, blogs, etc.) may inquire directly to team leadership or members about the Polk County CERT. All members should refer all questions to Polk County EMA.

There may be times a member is given permission to speak or give a statement to media outlets regarding the Polk County CERT. No member will be allowed to speak to the media about matters regarding disasters or emergency incidents.

8.2. Selection Process for Team Members

Membership on the team is not automatic. At Polk EMA we believe all people have the ability to become successful members of Polk County CERT. Though the goal of Polk County CERT is to recruit and maintain the highest quality members who will embody the values and fulfill the mission of Polk County CERT and Polk County EMA.

Therefore, the following process for membership selection is established:

- a) Perspective members will fill out an application and submit it to Polk EMA.
- b) Polk EMA will examine the candidate's application, references and complete a thorough examination of the candidate's past work history, criminal background check, character, training, work experience, etc.
- c) Applicants who meet the qualifications for membership will be given an interview.
- d) After interview(s) are concluded the candidate(s) will be notified of acceptance or denial.

9. Promotional Process

9.1. Process for filling vacancies and positions

At times vacancies will occur in leadership positions within the CERT Team. It is the goal of Polk County CERT to fill these positions with the highest quality of candidates. This selection is to be based on merit and a member's ability to fulfill the obligation of the role they will be taking on.

When a vacancy or position comes open for positions within the team Polk EMA will announce the vacancy and post a written notice that application will be accepted for the position, and a date will be established as a deadline for the submission of an application.

Members wishing to apply for the position will submit a letter of intent, complete a brief questionnaire, and an application. If the applicant desires, additional information concerning personal background and/or qualifications for the

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position may be submitted in the form of a resume of no more than five pages in length.

Polk EMA will review the submitted applications and the applicant's personnel record, comparing the information with the minimum requirements of the position applied for. Applicants meeting qualifications for the position applied for will be given an interview with Polk EMA. Once all interviews are completed Polk EMA will appoint the highest quality candidate to the position applied for.

10. Code of Conduct

Polk EMA expects that all members of Polk County CERT will build and maintain trust with Polk Public Safety as well as the citizens of Polk County through professional behavior. While on duty, at any events or activations, and while wearing any CERT logo items, Polk County CERT members are expected to comply with the following:

- 10.1. Exercise safety as your first priority. CERT Volunteers will only undertake activities that are within their physical capabilities, within the scope of their training, and will not take risks that are likely to cause injury to themselves or others.
- 10.2. CERT Volunteers will not participate in any CERT activities if under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.
- 10.3. Polk County ID badges and CERT shirts will be worn during official CERT activations. CERT reflective vests will be worn for night events or when CERT Volunteers will be in close proximity to vehicle traffic.
- 10.4. Equipment issued to CERT Volunteers must be maintained in good working condition and must be stored in a place that will prevent items from being taken and/or used by unauthorized persons.
- 10.5. CERT Volunteers will not use their membership in this program to gain favors, preferential treatment, or to influence others for any purpose other than emergency preparedness or disaster services.
- 10.6. CERT Volunteers will treat others and property with respect and courtesy.
- 10.7. CERT Volunteers will direct anyone who is looking for official statements from Polk County CERT to Polk EMA officials.
- 10.8. CERT Volunteers will respect the privacy of persons served by Polk County CERT and hold all sensitive, private, and personal information in confidence.
- 10.9. CERT Volunteers must not receive compensation for any services rendered during their time of activation.
- 10.10. CERT Volunteers must obey all local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
- 10.11. CERT Volunteers should bring any concerns and/or complaints to the CERT Program Manager so that they may be addressed appropriately.
- 10.12. Polk EMA is committed to a policy of fair representation and will not discriminate on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, race, color, or creed etc. Volunteers will adhere to these same standards in the course of their duties.

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11. Grounds for Removal

- 11.1. All CERT members are subject to dismissal from the program for any reason as appropriated by the CERT Team Leader. Some examples of actions that could result in removal from the CERT program are:
- a) Violation of the SOPs/Guidelines depending on the severity of the offense.
 - b) Self-deployment to an incident or scene.
 - c) Unauthorized use of CERT signage or logos.
 - d) Unprofessional or aggressive behavior toward other CERT members, residents, first responders, or other authorities.
 - e) Spreading false information regarding disasters or incidents.
 - f) Failure to follow the direction of authorities.
 - g) Being found guilty of a crime by a judge or jury.
- 11.2. The Polk County EMA Director will make the final determination on whether a member will be dismissed. After a member has been removed, he or she must return all equipment provided by the CERT program within two weeks. This person will be charged for non-returned items to the fullest extent of the law.

12. Conclusion

The CERT program and the members is a valuable resource to Polk County when operating in its intended functions. It is a direct reflection of Polk EMA as well as the Board of Commissioners, therefore it is the goal to establish and maintain a professional image. All members are respected components of the CERT system. These Standard Operating Guidelines help insure proper orientation of the program and its members. Each member is responsible for understanding and following these guidelines.

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Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) Acknowledgement

I have read and understand these CERT Standard Operating Guidelines. I agree to follow these guidelines while participating in the Polk EMA CERT program. I understand that not following these guidelines may result in my removal from the program.

Signature

Date

Printed Name