

CERT in Rhode Island

*Community Emergency Response
Teams: State Policy and Guidance*

June 2018



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Promulgation Statement

Transmitted herewith is *CERT in Rhode Island – Community Emergency Response Teams: State Policy and Guidance* hereinafter referred to as the RI CERT Guide. This Guide offers organized and incorporated entities tangible practices to develop and maintain *Community Emergency Response Teams* (CERT). It also defines potential areas of support from State and Federal sources.

In my capacity as Director of the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency, I hereby promulgate and issue this Guide as the official guidance in developing Community Emergency Response Teams in Rhode Island.

***CERT in Rhode Island, Community Emergency Response Teams: State Policy and Guidance* has been approved for implementation by:**



Peter T. Gaynor, CEM
Director, RIEMA

June 13, 2018

Date

Record of Changes

Change Number	Section	Date of Change	Individual Making Change	Description of Change

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Rhode Island Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Guide is to provide guidance and best practices to local communities to create a CERT using the whole community approach within the Federal mission areas of prevention, mitigation, response, and recovery. CERTs are designed to improve response and recovery capabilities in local communities. The CERT program is aligned under the *National Preparedness Goal* Core Capability of Community Resilience. CERTs are a vital element in a community's ability to react and respond to incidents, as well as manage planned events.

1.2 Goals and Objectives

The CERT program is designed to train citizens to be better prepared to take care of themselves, family, friends, neighbors, and/or co-workers in the event of an emergency or disaster that may impact their community until trained emergency first responders arrive.

The RI CERT Program is designed to assist municipalities to effectively meet the challenges faced during natural and/or man-made incidents or events. The Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (RIEMA) provides technical assistance and support to municipalities and qualified non-governmental organizations to establish and maintain a cadre of trained and equipped volunteers through recognized practices and standards within the capability building process of Planning, Organization, Equipment, Training and Exercise (POETE) (see attachment 1).

1.3 Relationship to the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)

This document complies with the requirements of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. Users of this document are expected to be familiar with the CEMP.

1.4 Authority

The RI CERT Program is built upon a foundation of specific Federal and State laws, as well as policy set at the federal level by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The Federal and State laws, as well as guidelines that are factored into the program, are listed below:

1. Presidential Policy Directive 8 - (PPD 8)
2. The National Preparedness Goal
3. The National Response Framework
4. 2018-2022 FEMA Strategic Plan
5. FEMA Citizens Corps Guidance
6. FEMA CERT Guidance
7. Code of Federal Regulation
8. Threat and Hazards Identification Risk Assessment (THIRA)

9. State Preparedness Report (SPR) Core Capabilities
10. State of Rhode Island General Laws

1.5 CERT State Guiding Inputs

Presidential Policy Directive – 8

Presidential Policy Directive – 8 (PPD-8) was signed by President Obama on March 30, 2011 with the goal of strengthening the security and resilience of the United States through systematic preparation for the threats that pose the greatest risk to the security of the Nation, including acts of terrorism, cyber-attacks, pandemics, and catastrophic natural disasters. To accomplish this goal, the directive sets forth the standards for developing the National Preparedness Goal and National Preparedness Framework.

National Preparedness Goal

The Federal National Preparedness Goal, released in September 2011, defines what it means for the whole community to be prepared for all types of disasters and emergencies. The National Preparedness Goal is:

“A secure and resilient nation with the capabilities required across the whole community to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk.”

Furthermore, the National Preparedness Goal defines core capabilities necessary to prepare for the specific types of incidents that pose the greatest risk to the security of the Nation. The goal emphasizes actions aimed at achieving an integrated, layered, and all-of-Nation preparedness approach that optimizes the use of available resources. The goal specifically cites community involvement as an essential in response element and states “...Community involvement, therefore, is a vital link to providing additional support to response personnel and may often be the primary source of manpower in the first hours and days after a catastrophic incident. Because of this, community members should be encouraged to train, exercise, and partner with emergency management officials....”

National Response Framework

The National Response Framework is a guide to how the Nation responds to all types of disasters and emergencies. It calls for a scalable approach to disaster and specifically cites the use of CERT by noting, “Individuals can also contribute to the preparedness and resilience of their households and communities by volunteering with emergency organizations (e.g., the local chapter of the American Red Cross, Medical Reserve Corps, or Community Emergency Response Teams) and completing emergency response training courses. Individuals, families, and households should prepare with family members who have access and functional needs or medical needs.”

2018-2022 FEMA Strategic Plan

The 2018-2022 FEMA Strategic Plan creates a shared vision for the field of emergency management and sets an ambitious, yet achievable path forward to unify and further professionalize emergency management across the country. Input from stakeholders and partners is used to build a stronger Agency and a more prepared and resilient nation. The Strategic Plan sets out three overarching Strategic Goals: build a culture of preparedness, ready the nation for catastrophic disasters, and reduce the complexity of FEMA. CERT falls within the first goal as team members are helping communities become more prepared for disasters.

FEMA Citizens Corps Guidance

Stemming from the attacks on September 11, 2001, the Federal Government began to form a robust Department of Homeland Security to combat the on-going threat of terrorism. It was determined that a robust volunteer program would bolster disaster response.

The mission of Citizen Corps is to harness the power of every individual through education, training, and volunteer service to make communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to the threats of terrorism, crime, public health issues, and disasters of all kinds.

FEMA CERT Guidance

The FEMA publication “Start and Maintain a CERT” indicates general tips as well as background information concerning establishment of a CERT. The guide provides invaluable reference material and resource information to include website links to successful CERT around the United States.

Code of Federal Regulation

The Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) defines a Volunteer as “An individual who performs hours of service for a public agency for civic, charitable, or humanitarian reasons, without promise, expectation or receipt of compensation for services rendered, is considered to be a volunteer during such hours.”

Threat and Hazards Identification Risk Assessment (THIRA)

The State of Rhode Island has its own set of inputs which form the foundation of the program. The annual Threats and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) is conducted by bringing together many of the state’s critical stakeholders and conducting workshops which yield data on what threats and risks are most germane and critical to the state. Data from the THIRA is used to help the training and exercise division focus its efforts on prioritizing programs, which includes CERT, to conduct. The program also extrapolates data from the State of Rhode Island Homeland Security Strategy, the State Preparedness Report (SPR) and the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP).

State Preparedness Report (SPR) Core Capabilities

The State Preparedness Report Survey Tool is a self-assessment of the capabilities required to prevent, protect against, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from all threats and hazards. This annual assessment is mandated for any state or territory receiving preparedness assistance that is administered by the Department of Homeland Security. The SPR evaluates the level of preparedness for each of the 31 Core Capabilities (formerly the 37 Target Capabilities). POETE elements are rated on a scale of 1 to 5 for each Core Capability.

State of Rhode Island General Laws

Rhode Island General Law (RIGL) § 30-15-8 Mobile Support Units

The governor or the governor's duly designated representative is authorized to create and establish any number of mobile support units that may be necessary to reinforce disaster organizations in stricken areas with due consideration of the plans of the federal government and of other states. Mobile support units shall be called to duty upon orders of the governor and shall perform their functions in any part of the state or, upon the conditions specified in this section, in other states.

RIGL §30-15-15, Immunity from liability – Compensation for death or injury of disaster response workers

All functions under this chapter, and all other activities relating to disaster response, are hereby declared to be governmental functions. Any requirement for a license to practice any professional, mechanical, or other skill shall not apply to any authorized disaster response worker who shall, in the course of performing his or her duties as such, practice such professional, mechanical, or other skill during a disaster emergency. In the absence of any other benefits as provided by law, all disaster response workers who shall be killed or sustain disability or injury while in training for or on disaster response duty shall be construed to be employees of the state, any other provisions of the law to the contrary notwithstanding, and shall be compensated in like manner as state employees are compensated under the provisions of chapters 29 – 38 of title 28. As used in this section, the term "disaster response worker" shall include any full- or part-time paid, volunteer, or auxiliary employee of this state, other states, territories, or possessions, the District of Columbia, the federal government, any neighboring country, or any political subdivision thereof, or any agency or organization, or any private person, firm, or corporation performing disaster response services at any place in this state subject to the order or control of, or pursuant to a request of, the state government or any political subdivision thereof.

§ 28-31-12. Application to disaster response workers

All members of disaster response forces who are killed or sustain disability or injury while in training for or on disaster response duty shall be construed to be

employees of the state and compensated in like manner as state employees are compensated under the provisions of chapters 29 – 38 of this title. All claims shall be filed, prosecuted and determined in accordance with the procedure set forth in chapters 29 – 38 of this title.

1.6 Logistics Support & Resource Requirements

The Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency will coordinate all logistical support and resource requirements necessary to implement and track the State's Emergency Management plans.

2.0 The CERT Program

2.1 CERT Program Outputs

Enhanced Community Resilience

As a result of training, CERT members will be better prepared to assist themselves, as well as the community in times of disaster. This output will result in better prepared individuals and communities, creating a more resilient state.

Structured Method of Volunteer Deployment During Disasters

CERT members are trained on when and how to respond. The training allows for a safe deployment of individuals and groups to accomplish a task. CERT members learn how to respond to a scene and assess hazards while rendering assistance to local authorities. This will allow for a community to have a resource pool to aid and assist during an event or disaster, allowing to be better situated for recovery efforts. This leads to a faster, holistic recovery.

Whole Community Approach to Response is Implemented

CERT members bring unique and varied talents to a response. Members can come from all sectors of a community, allowing for a good representation of individuals across the teams. This representation of the whole community allows for increased knowledge of the community, as well as the ability to have different mindsets, opinions, and educations of the whole community. This is needed for an informed, comprehensive response and recovery process.

Trained Response Regarding "Preparedness"

Once CERT members are trained, they are ready to assist themselves and others in a disaster or community event. A CERT volunteer is an informed member of the community through training and exercises; therefore, better prepared to respond if needed. The training provides for a collective understanding and response with the intention of a unified or standard approach to dealing with disaster and recovery.

3.0 Functional Roles & Responsibilities

3.1 Responsibilities of Local Primary Agencies

Municipalities and Public/Private Organizations. CERT is managed at the local level. The Chief Executive Officer or Director of a public or private entity holds the ultimate responsibility for their CERT program and its use (deployment) within its jurisdiction/incorporation.

First responders need to be educated about CERTs and their value to the community. Using CERT as a component of the response system when there are exercises for potential disasters can reinforce this idea.

The responsibility to manage liability exists at the municipal level. FEMA has produced a *CERT Liability Guide* to assist in decision making: <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/28051>

3.2 Responsibilities of Support Agency(s)

State Emergency Management. RIEMA will act as a liaison to the municipalities CERT programs to provide support, grant funding when available, and technical assistance as requested. The RIEMA Preparedness Coordinator serves as the primary state contact for all CERT needs and guidance. Local CERT leaders, members, and managers are expected to follow the guidelines set forth by the federal government.

4.0 Execution

Execution of a CERT program begins with an assessment of a community's risks and hazards and the recognition of the Core Capabilities necessary for emergency management effectiveness. The formation of CERTs falls in line with FEMA's core-capability of *Community Resilience*:

Mission Area: Mitigation

Description: Lead the integrated effort to recognize, understand, communicate, plan, and address risks so that the community can develop a set of actions to accomplish mitigation and improve resilience.

Community Resilience also provides for the preparation of everyone in America to be fully aware, trained, and practiced on how to prevent, protect/mitigate, prepare for, and respond

to all threats and hazards. This requires a role for citizens in personal preparedness, exercises, ongoing volunteer programs, and surge capacity response.

This core-capability is also identified as a “priority core-capability” by RIEMA. The goal being to support, assist and motivate all 39 communities in identifying their resilience priorities and developing the ability to systematically anticipate and adjust to trends that could endanger the future of their community.

4.1 Getting Started

Determine Your Team Type. CERT may be developed within a variety of communities, cities, and towns large and small as well as grade schools, college campuses and places of business. All CERT programs are recommended to coordinate with local and state emergency management. Aside from a typical municipal CERT, additional types may be created, they include:

Traditional Community-based CERT

<https://www.ready.gov/community-emergency-response-team>

Campus CERT Starter Guide

https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1470339607110-e31f7c7086431f7f8fba48bf6f3dd9fe/Campus_CERT_Starter_Guide_Final.pdf

Teen CERT Starter Guide

https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1449865324894-7898237eb0427d36e98932589825151b/teen_cert_launch_maintaintraining_508_111315.pdf

Workplace CERT Starter Guide

https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1470334971721-28632dc8e7bda1d973689ca954d388a2/Workplace_CERT_Starter_Guide_Final.pdf

Videos. FEMA has also produced numerous CERT training videos that can be found on YouTube. Many local jurisdictions have also added CERT related videos within the YouTube channels. They are available by search.

Web-based Training. Training for leadership positions are available at the FEMA Emergency Management Institute (EMI) in Emmitsburg, MD.

FEMA IS-317: Introduction to CERT

"Introduction to Community Emergency Response Teams," IS-317, is an independent study course that serves as an introduction to CERT for those wanting to complete training or as a refresher for current team members. It has six modules with topics that include an Introduction to CERT, Fire Safety, Hazardous Material

and Terrorist Incidents, Disaster Medical Operations and Search and Rescue. It takes between six and eight hours to complete the course. Those who successfully finish it will receive a certificate of completion.

Link to course: <https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-317>

Resources. CERT Basic Training Course Materials

English CERT materials

[English version of the CERT Instructor Guide](#)

[English version of the CERT Instructor Guide Hazard Annex](#)

[English version of the CERT Participant Manual](#)

[English version of the CERT Participant Manual Hazard Annex](#)

[English version of the CERT PowerPoint Slides](#)

[English version of the CERT PowerPoint Slides Hazard Annex](#)

Spanish CERT materials

[Descargar Materiales de CERT Capacitación Básica \(Instructor Guide in Spanish\)](#)

[Descargar Manual del Participante de CERT Capacitación Básica \(Participant Manual in Spanish\)](#)

[Descargar Diapositivas de PowerPoint de CERT Capacitación Básica \(PowerPoint Slides in Spanish\)](#)

CERT Train-the-Trainer Course Materials

[CERT Train-the-Trainer Course Instructor Guide](#)

[CERT Train-the-Trainer Course Participant Manual](#)

[CERT Train-the-Trainer Course PowerPoint Slides](#)

CERT Program Manager Course Materials

[CERT Program Manager Course Instructor Guide](#)

[CERT Program Manager Course Participant Manual](#)

[CERT Program Manager Course PowerPoint Slides](#)

CERT Supplemental Training

[CERT Animal Response Module I](#)

[CERT Animal Response Module II](#)

[CERT Emergency Communications Module](#)

[CERT Tools for Leadership Success Module](#)

[CERT Traffic and Crowd Management Module](#)

[Flood Response for CERTs](#)

[CERT Firefighter Rehab](#)

[CERT Exercise Swaps](#)

4.2 Training Your Team

The CERT training for community groups is usually delivered in 2.5-hour sessions, one evening a week over a 7-week period, but some communities will vary the delivery schedule based off of scheduling and the participants. The training consists of the following:

Session I, Disaster Preparedness: Addresses hazards to which people are vulnerable in their community. Materials cover actions that participants and their families take before, during and after a disaster. As the session progresses, the instructor begins to explore an expanded response role for civilians in that they should begin to consider themselves disaster workers. Since they will want to help their family members and neighbors, this training can help them operate in a safe and appropriate manner. The CERT concept and organization are discussed as well as applicable laws governing volunteers in that jurisdiction.

Session II, Disaster Fire Suppression: Briefly covers fire chemistry, hazardous materials, fire hazards and fire suppression strategies. However, the thrust of this session is the safe use of fire extinguishers, sizing up the situation, controlling utilities and extinguishing a small fire.

Session III, Disaster Medical Operations Part I: Participants practice diagnosing and treating airway obstruction, bleeding and shock by using simple triage and rapid treatment techniques.

Session IV, Disaster Medical Operations, Part II: Covers evaluating patients by doing a head to toe assessment, establishing a medical treatment area, performing basic first aid and practicing in a safe and sanitary manner.

Session V, Light Search and Rescue Operations: Participants learn about search and rescue planning, size-up, search techniques, rescue techniques and, most important, rescuer safety.

Session VI, Disaster Psychology and Team Organization: Covers signs and symptoms that might be experienced by the disaster victim and worker. It addresses CERT organization and management principles and the need for documentation.

Session VII, Course Review and Disaster Simulation: Participants review their answers from a take home examination. Finally, they practice the skills that they have learned during the previous six sessions in disaster activity.

4.3 Testing Your Team

Annual Meetings

Annual meetings will be held to bring all local CERT team leaders together to update RIEMA and other leaders of current issues, initiatives, concerns, and successes. This will allow for increased networking among team leaders in the state and the ability to collaborate and implement new initiatives.

CERT Rodeo

The CERT Rodeo allow both the students and team members to participate in a hands-on exercise that provides members with an unrestricted environment allowing them the opportunity to test the skills and techniques learned during their classroom training.

Once a year, RIEMA will assist to coordinate a State CERT Rodeo with local teams in the state. This will bring together all current Rhode Island CERT members and leaders to collaborate, discuss current processes, and receive specialized, scenario based training that is not covered in the basic course that can assist participants in their role as a CERT member. This will allow for an open forum to discuss any additional needs, resources, training, or support needed, in addition to allowing for innovative ideas and techniques to be shared within a group discussion.

4.4 Leadership Structure

It is recommended to establish a leadership structure for your CERT program. There are multiple versions and formats depending on the size, skills, and missions of the team, but a trained CERT Program Manager is a national best practice. Training for this position is available at the FEMA Emergency Management Institute (EMI) in Emmitsburg, MD and is touched upon further in the Training and Exercise section.

A Team Leader should be appointed and a Deputy Team Leader if it is determined that it is needed. The Team Leader and Deputy maintain communications with the local Emergency Management Director (EMD) and are responsible for ensuring all team obligations are met. The Team Leader may develop a leadership contingent as defined in the local by-laws and standard operating procedures to include but are not limited to:

- Communication, logistics, training, membership/training, secretary, finances, etc.;
- Develop a meeting schedule for the team and provide it to the local EMD;
- Arrange/coordinate meetings, workshops, or trainings;
- Maintain roster of team members and provide updates to local EMD;
- Assure meeting minutes are taken, distributed, and maintained;
- Manage membership information, including applications and contact information, Code of Conduct, meeting/exercise attendance and training recommendations;
- Ensure each member receives proper training and equipment (as needed); and
- Make sure that each member has photo identification.

Leadership Opportunities

- **E0427 Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program Manager** prepares participants to establish and sustain an active local CERT program.
- **E0428 CERT Train-the-Trainer** prepares participants to deliver FEMA's CERT Basic Training course.
- Link for more information: <http://training.fema.gov>

4.5 Recommended CERT Activities

Recommended activities of CERT within the cycle of emergency management include:

Mitigation

- Smoke alarm installation
- Debris clearing from rivers and streams
- Conducting a needs assessment

Preparedness

- Training
- Exercise
- Staffing preparedness booths at community events

Response

- Amateur radio monitoring
- Traffic control

- EOC support

Recovery

- Damage and impact assessments
- Points of Distribution (POD) support
- Support to vulnerable populations

4.6 RIEMA CERT Recommendations

RIEMA recommends the following steps to create a CERT:

- Work with the RIEMA Preparedness Coordinator and local EMD (if applicable) to determine if there are any other teams in the area;
- Identify the program goals that the CERT will meet and the resources available to conduct the program in your area. This is an excellent opportunity for the local and state government to be proactive in working with its constituency;
- Train CERT instructor cadre;
- Gain approval from appointed and elected officials to use CERT to prepare citizens to care for themselves during a disaster when services may not be adequate
- Develop a strategy, work plan, and by-laws;
- Identify and recruit potential participants. Natural fits for CERT are community groups, business and industry workers and local government workers;
- Participants complete 20-hour in person training;
- Register the CERT on the FEMA/DHS website and maintain with up-to-date information: <http://www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams/>
- Members should pass and consistently engage in a yearly background check through the Rhode Island Bureau of Criminal Identification (BCI); and
- Members should complete NIMS: IS 100, IS-700 and Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) training.

Additional considerations:

- CERTs should maintain an ICS organization chart;
- CERTs should maintain an up to date roster and team equipment inventory list and provide said lists to RIEMA upon request;
- Provide RIEMA with quarterly reports;
- Each CERT should meet a minimum of four (4) times per year and at least half of these meetings should include workshop or classroom training. Attendance rosters should be kept and be provided to RIEMA upon request and in quarterly reports;
- If the local community is the host, a current Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) should be on file at RIEMA;
- Indemnify members who are called out for a training, an event, or disaster;
- Follow “POETE” standards and register the Team with RIEMA; and

- Conduct refresher training and exercises with CERTs.

It is also recommended to establish a social media presence to promote and maintain the CERT program. The following link demonstrates examples of an effective social media initiative: <http://www.cert-la.com/cert-la-news/cert-la-social-media-links/>

4.7 CERT Program Management & Reporting Recommendations

The local EMD and the CERT Team Leader may work together to satisfy the following RIEMA recommendations. Support to these recommendations improve State preparedness efforts toward effective local CERT support of resources and technical services.

Annual Reports. These reports should include, but are not limited to:

- Roster of current teams in community and members (including name, DOB, certifications, and job description or outline of what duties the individual is expected to perform as a member of the team);
- Training schedule for the next six months;
- Equipment inventory and anticipated maintenance for next six months;
- Anticipated needs for the next six months; and
- Budget request for the next calendar year.

4.8 Sustainability

Grant Assistance

Periodically, targeted CERT program development or sustainment grant opportunities may be made available through RIEMA through the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) and the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP). Available grants will be posted on the RIEMA website and distributed through email notifications to CERT Program Managers, Leaders and EMDs. All requests should meet available, posted grant eligibility guidance and be aligned to the CERT mission and State core-capability priorities. All requests will be subject to a review process based on guidance and standards. See RIEMA grant guidance:

<http://www.riema.ri.gov//grants/index.php>

All purchases should be made according to local and state purchasing as well as grant specific guidelines. All equipment purchased must be on the most recent Authorized Equipment List (AEL). This list can be accessed at: <https://www.fema.gov/authorized-equipment-list>

Note: Federal funding may not be available at any given time and ultimately, CERT development and sustainment is a local, grass roots responsibility.

Technical Assistance

RIEMA's Preparedness Division staff is available to assist cities, towns, tribal entities in CERT team development. This assistance can be provided in the form of grant/budget development, exercises, training, planning, workshops, site visits, and technical review.

Partnerships and Mutual Aid

It is recommended to develop partnerships, public and private within a community to develop a sustainable CERT program. Mutual aid agreements between neighboring jurisdictions could be expanded to include the sharing of CERTs during severe emergencies, disasters, or events.

5.0 Plan Maintenance

This CERT Guide is maintained in accordance with the *Plans Standardization and Maintenance Policy*. In addition, community engagement is vital to maintaining the viability of this document.

6.0 Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
AEL	Authorized Equipment List
BCI	Bureau of Criminal Investigation
CEMP	Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan
CERT	Community Emergency Response Team
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
EMA	Emergency Management Agency
EMI	Emergency Management Institute
EMPG	Emergency Management Performance Grant
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
ICS	Incident Command System
NIMS	National Incident Management System
POC	Point of Contact
POETE	Planning, Organization, Equipment, Training, and Exercise
POD	Point of Distribution
PPD	Presidential Policy Directive
RIEMA	Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency

SAR	Suspicious Activity Reporting
SHSGP	State Homeland Security Grant Program
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPR	State Preparedness Report
THIRA	Threat Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

Attachment 1:

RI CERT- RIEMA Support Service includes the potential for technical assistance, equipment, and targeted funding for qualified applicants. To be eligible, your program should meet certain baseline standards. Current standards are seen below in a “POETE” structure:

Planning (P)	Organization (O)	Equipment (E)	Training (T)	Exercise (E)
Create and/or maintain a plan or strategy for CERT activation, organization, equipment use, training, and exercise.	Maintain an active roster of members with defined skills, abilities and roles.	All RIEMA equipment support should be tied to a documented team strategy, operational plans, organizational charts and defined mission objectives.	All standard “basic” CERT training is taught by qualified volunteer instructors. Basic instruction is through the DHS 20-hour class room curriculum. Trainer qualifications include completion of DHS Train-the Trainer CERT Course.	Community level drills are encouraged and supported to test skills developed during the various training modules.
	Be NIMS compliant – with an ICS organizational chart (ICS 207) that defines team structure and clear span of control.	Basic, eligible items are based on national best practices.		Integration of CERT into regional and State level exercises supports those events as well as provide to the trained volunteers a larger whole community awareness to emergency actions.
	Convene quarterly to train, refresh and plan future activity.	CERT bags/kits are standard issue (approx. \$50 -75/per kit).		