



# **NYCEM**

**New York City Emergency Management**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT WELCOMES 42 NEW MEMBERS TO NEW YORK CITY'S COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT)**

**New graduates are joining 24 divisions of credentialed volunteers to help their communities during emergencies**



**December 18, 2024** –The New York City Emergency Management Department (NYCEM) welcomed 42 new Community Emergency Response Team (NYC CERT) volunteers to its program during a graduation ceremony on Tuesday, December 17 at NYCEM headquarters. The NYC CERT basic training cycle includes 11 sessions that focus on disaster preparedness and emergency response, equipping volunteers with skills in basic fire safety, search and rescue, traffic management, and first aid and triage. NYC Emergency Management offered the training program with instructors from the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) and New York City Police Department (NYPD) Auxiliary Unit. NYC Emergency Management First Deputy

Commissioner Christina Farrell, FDNY First Deputy Commissioner Mark Guerra, and NYPD Deputy Chief of Patrol Michael Barreto were on hand to deliver remarks.

“Community Emergency Response Teams are a critical resource in supporting New York City during disasters and an integral part of the City’s emergency planning,” said **New York City Emergency Management Commissioner Zach Iscol**. “Whether it’s responding to planned or unplanned events or preparing their community for future emergencies, CERT members are there to answer the call. We congratulate the 42 graduates and look forward to the great work they will do in assisting their fellow New Yorkers.”

“Members of NYC CERT have been actively involved in their communities for more than two decades, playing pivotal roles in increasing safety and improving the quality of life in our city,” said **NYPD Commissioner Jessica S. Tisch**. “These dedicated volunteers understand the importance of collaboration in supporting and caring for our neighbors, as all New Yorkers rely on us. I would like to congratulate and welcome the 42 newest members of this crucial program, and commend every CERT instructor from the NYPD, FDNY, and NYC Emergency Management for their selfless dedication to our shared mission of public safety.”

“The continued partnership between the FDNY and the NYC Emergency Management Community Emergency Response Teams is critical to public safety,” said **Fire Commissioner Robert S. Tucker**. “These dedicated volunteers are working to ensure our city is safe and prepared for whatever comes up. CERT is a great asset to all first responders, and I look forward to seeing the valuable work these graduates will do.”

During the graduation, the Brooklyn Division 1 CERT team received the Joanne Webb-Dixon Award for their extensive work in community preparedness in 2023, through building and expanding partnerships in their community. The team’s work included supporting Haitian Flag Day, community resource and church fairs, and the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women’s Club preparedness event. The award is named after the late CERT member who was devoted to community engagement and preparedness. The Carlos Nieves NYC CERT Team Award for Excellence in Deployment and Emergency Response was presented to the Manhattan Division 5 CERT team for supporting numerous events in 2023 such as the Five Boro Bike Tour, Let’s Feed Harlem food distribution event, and flood preparedness canvassing for Manhattan Day of Action. This award is also named after a late CERT member for his generous commitment and support through deployments. The awards were presented by NYC Emergency Management CERT Recruitment & Retention Specialist Denise Esposito.

“NYC CERT members are essential to New York City’s emergency preparedness. These volunteers are committed to supporting our city during emergency events,” said **NYC Emergency Management Deputy Commissioner of Community Preparedness Herman Schaffer**. “We congratulate all 42 new CERT members for completing their rigorous training, their dedication to their communities strengthens the city’s resilience. We also want to congratulate our award recipients for their great work in community preparedness.”

Most recently, NYC CERT members have responded to both planned and emergency events across a range of critical operations, including our heat preparedness canvassing efforts throughout the five boroughs, as well as providing support for cultural events at Gracie Mansion. CERT members also played a key role in assisting with Asylum Seeker operations at the St. Brigid Reticketing Center. Additionally, they supported activities directly impacting asylum seekers, including helping with commodity distribution. CERT was also deployed to support several major events, such as the New York City Pride Parade, the Veteran’s Day Parade, the Five Boro Bike Tour, and the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade Balloon Inflation, where they helped support the flow of vehicular traffic and pedestrians ensuring safety and smooth operation of these large-scale events.

CERT members also work year-round to ensure their communities are prepared for emergencies, providing information and resources to assist residents with creating an emergency plan for their friends and family. NYC Emergency Management hosts CERT training cycles three times a year.

Since its launch 2003, NYC CERT has responded to a host of emergencies, and local divisions quickly adapt to the City’s specific emergency needs. CERT members also work year-round to ensure their communities are prepared for emergencies, providing information and resources to assist residents with creating an emergency plan for their friends and family. NYC Emergency

Management hosts Community Emergency Response Team training cycles three times a year. For more information about the program, or if you are interested in becoming a volunteer, call 311 or visit [NYC.gov/cert](http://NYC.gov/cert).

### **Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) in New York City**

The New York City CERT program started in 2003 with 106 volunteers. Today, there are 24 divisions of credentialed volunteers covering all 59 NYC community boards, with over 741 volunteers. NYC CERT volunteers participate in a 11-session basic training program where they receive instruction from active members of the FDNY, FDNY-EMS, NYPD, and NYC Emergency Management. Volunteers are trained in disaster preparedness and basic emergency response skills, including fire safety, light search and rescue, disaster medical operations, and traffic management.

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