

**For Immediate Release**

**#2-21**

## **NEW YORKERS COMPLETE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TRAINING TO BECOME COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS**

*32 graduates are joining more than 1,200 Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)  
volunteers to help their communities during emergencies  
{Click to watch the [graduation](#)}*

**January 8, 2021** – The New York City Emergency Management Department welcomed 32 new Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers to its program during a virtual graduation on Tuesday, January 5. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the new graduates participated in the inaugural virtual training program. After weeks of remote learning, the new volunteers are eager to assist New Yorkers before, during, and after emergencies.

“Every year groups of New Yorkers from diverse backgrounds and careers commit to become CERT volunteers who serve New York City residents. Since March, CERT volunteers have become a critical resource in supporting New Yorkers impacted by the pandemic,” **said New York City Emergency Management Commissioner Deanne Criswell**. “We are inspired by their desire to learn about disaster preparedness and emergency response. Their ability to adjust to the new training underscores their commitment to serving New York City residents.”

The CERT basic training cycle includes 10 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. New York City Emergency Management offered the virtual training program with instructors from the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) and New York City Police Department (NYPD) Auxiliary Unit. The full graduation ceremony is available [here](#).

“Community Emergency Response Teams are a valuable asset to our city and especially to first responders,” said **Fire Department Commissioner Daniel A. Nigro**. “Since 2003, FDNY members have been proud to take part in the important training offered to these dedicated volunteers who so often step up to help their communities when they are needed most.”

CERT volunteers have continued to support their communities throughout the coronavirus pandemic. CERT COVID operations have represented the longest deployment in the program’s history. Volunteers have supported their communities throughout the city by checking in on seniors, distributing food via the Get Food program, performing buddy checks on other volunteers, and distributing personal protective equipment (PPE). Unrelated to COVID-19, volunteers regularly work with NYPD to conduct traffic and pedestrian management during public events.

“What I enjoyed the most about the training were the presenters, diversity among the participants and presenters, encouragement of participation, and the overall organization,” said **new**

**graduate Eva Chavez.** “I was also really amazed by the amount of information shared in such a short amount of time.”

In addition to celebrating the new class of CERT volunteers, NYC Emergency Management honored FDNY Deputy Chief James Brosi, a 27-year veteran of FDNY, who is leaving his role as lead CERT program instructor after 15 years. Brosi played an integral role in building the NYC CERT curriculum, coordinated all of the FDNY training staff, and served as FDNY liaison with NYC Emergency Management. For more information about the CERT program, or if you are interested in becoming a CERT volunteer, call 311 or visit [NYC.gov/CERT](http://nyc.gov/CERT).

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