

CERT/Citizens Corps

FY 2026-2027 Request for Applications

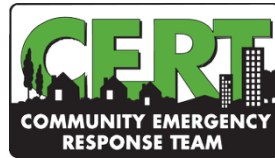
Technical Assistance Webinar



volunteerflorida

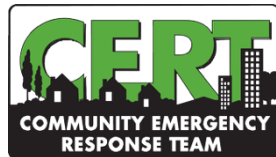
Tips for Participating

- Please mute your lines
- To ask questions, use the chat box or
- Click on the hand icon to let us know you have a question.
- At the end of the presentation there will be a Question and Answer section
- Recording of the webinar and the response to questions will be posted at volunteerflorida.org



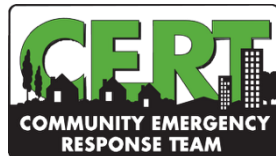
Overview

- Volunteer Florida anticipates granting \$100,000 for disaster preparedness, training, and education needs of Floridians through a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and/or a Citizens Corps (CC) Program.
- Minimum grant request is \$5,000, to a Maximum request of \$10,000
- Eligible applicants may apply for a both CERT or CC award; however separate applications must be submitted.
- Grant Period of performance is July 1, 2026 - May 31, 2027.



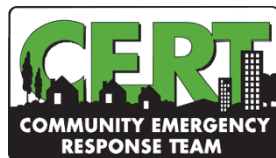
Eligibility

- An organization applying for a CERT or CC grant must:
 1. Be a county or city within the State of Florida, Fire Tax District, regional planning council, state supported community colleges, colleges, and universities, or a federally recognized tribe. Please note that 501(c)3 non-profit organizations are not directly eligible; however, local jurisdictions may subcontract with 501(c)3 organizations to perform these functions.
 2. Complete an online application.
- Previous grant recipients are eligible to apply for FY 2026-2027 grant if they have completed all close out paperwork on the previous grant and are in good standing with Volunteer Florida.
- Previous CERT/CC grantees performance (i.e. those who did not expend 100% of funds and/or submit timely reports) will be taken into consideration in the final application selection.



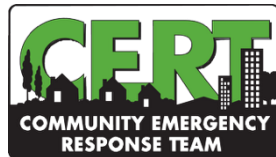
Eligibility for Current Grantees

- Current CERT/CC grantees for FY 25–26 are eligible to apply provided they have expended at least 50% of their FY 25–26 award prior to submitting a subsequent application. All current and previous grantees **must be** in full compliance with required reporting, including PER, Quarterly, and Closeout reports.
- Current grantees are required to complete additional application questions outlining their plan for spending down/expensing the remaining balance of their existing award. **Cash, in-kind or volunteer match** cannot be duplicated across FY 25–26 and FY 26–27. Quarterly reporting during the overlapping grant will need to be documented separately for FY 25-26 and FY 26-27.



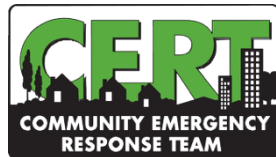
Funding Objectives

1. **Planning:** a methodical way to engage the whole community in the development of a strategic, operational, and community-based approach to preparedness.
2. **Organization:** funds may be used for all-hazards emergency management operations, staffing, and other day-to-day activities in support of emergency management, including staffing CERT and Citizen Corps positions at the state and local levels in order to promote whole community engagement in all phases of emergency management.
3. **Training:** should foster the development of a community-oriented approach to emergency management that emphasizes engagement at the community level, strengthens best practices, and provides a path toward building sustainable resilience.
4. **Exercise:** Funds used to design, develop, conduct and evaluate an exercise.



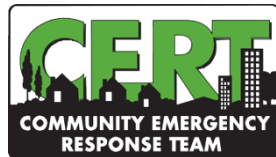
Funding Objectives

5. Equipment: allowable equipment categories are listed on the web-based version of the Authorized Equipment List (AEL) at:
<https://www.fema.gov/authorized-equipment-list>.
6. Management and Administration: activities are those defined as directly relating to the management and administration of Program funds, such as financial management and monitoring.
 - -M&A costs can not exceed 5% of the total grant award and must be included in your proposed budget.



Funding Prioritization

- Each complete application shall be evaluated and acted upon in a multi-stage process balancing timeliness with fiduciary responsibilities.
- Stage one involves staff review and preparation.
- Stage two involves evaluation by Volunteer Florida and Division of Emergency Management/State Emergency Response Team staff through a competitive review process against scoring criteria identified in the NOFO.



Fatal Criteria

Proposals will not be reviewed for funding unless all of the following criteria are met:

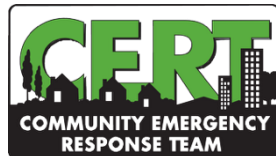
The proposal was submitted in the Blackbaud online portal and received by Volunteer Florida no later than **Wednesday, May 6, 2026 by 5:00 pm EDT**. Proposals will not be accepted via email or hard copy.

**Please note, Blackbaud automatically closes application process at 5:00 p.m. EDT*

The proposal must include:

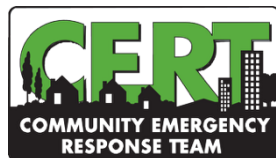
1. A completed application
2. **Supporting documentation:**
 - A. Letter of Support or Acknowledgment from Corresponding Emergency Management Office (except in the case where the applicant is the County Emergency Management Office)
 - B. Proposed program budget- using the template provided

Applicants who do not include all supporting documentation will not be considered for funding.



Budget

- Grantees are required to provide a 100% in kind and/or cash match. The use of volunteers can be used toward match. Currently, volunteer hours are valued by the Independent Sector at \$33.00/hr.
- This is a cost reimbursement grant.
- After the notice of award, Volunteer Florida will provide clarification and feedback on the proposed budget during the week of May 26, 2026 to June 12, 2026 to the applicant.
 - At the discretion of Volunteer Florida, based upon funding availability, priorities, and other factors, a sub-grantee may be funded at less than their requested amount.



Other Requirements

Quarterly Reporting:

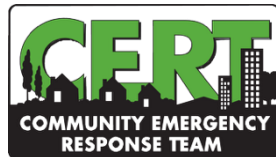
Successful sub-grantees will report to Volunteer Florida on a quarterly basis via Blackbaud. Performance measures should include number of volunteers engaged, hours served, number of community outreach, and number of trainings completed.

- Personal stories, testimonials, and pictures will be required.

Financial Reporting:

Successful sub-grantees will report to Volunteer Florida on a quarterly basis with submission of a Volunteer Florida Periodic Expenditure Report (PER) and appropriate supporting documentation of expenditures AND match using Volunteer Florida's invoice submission portal, Laserfiche.

- After submission of an invoice and supporting documentation, Volunteer Florida has 40 days to reimburse the organization as long as the invoice is correct and no other clarifications or supporting documentation is needed.
- Awarded grantees will be required to attend a Periodic Expenditure and Laserfiche Training (PER 101) webinar shortly after executed contracts are received.



CERT/Citizens Corps Anticipated Timeline

Timeline	Deadline
Notice of Funding Availability & Application Release:	March 16, 2026, COB
Technical Assistance Webinar:	April 8, 2026, 2:00pm – 3:00pm EDT
Technical Assistance Responses Posted:	April 10, 2026, COB
Technical Assistance: Finance Webinar:	April 20, 2026, 2:00pm – 3:00pm EDT
Technical Assistance: Finance Responses Posted:	April 22, 2026, COB
Deadline for Receipt of Applications via Blackbaud:	May 6, 2026, 5:00PM EDT
Grant Review Period	May 7, 2026 – May 20, 2026
Intent to Award Posted:	May 22, 2026, COB
Budget Clarification/Approval:	May 26, 2026 – June 12, 2026
Anticipated Contract Award:	Jul 1, 2026
Contract Period of Performance:	July 1, 2026 – May 31, 2027

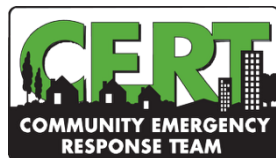
Important to note: Technical Assistance Responses for this webinar will be posted



Special Considerations

The Financial Technical Assistance Webinar will be on April 20, 2026 2:00pm EDT. This is especially important for those who have never written a VF/ CERT/CC budget before or those who have not gone through a VF clarification period.

Registration is not required and can be accessed through the Microsoft Teams link on the NOFO and on the Volunteer Florida website.



Technical Webinar: Finance

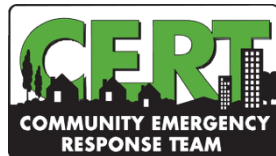
April 20, 2026

2:00 pm-3:00 pm EDT

Question Responses Posted:

April 22, 2026

COB



Q & A

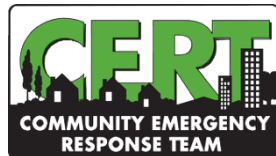
In regard to the equipment category, which specific section should we reference to determine what equipment items are eligible under this grant?

- Use the AEL List at <https://www.fema.gov/grants/tools/authorized-equipment-list>
- When you look for the equipment item make sure it lists FEMA Related Grant Programs: Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG)

As a 501(c)3 can I apply as a CERT Team?

All CERT teams must go through your Sponsoring Agency to apply. As a reminder you will need a Letter of Support or acknowledgment from corresponding County Emergency Management Office (except in the case where the applicant is the County Emergency Management Office).

Please note that 501(c)3 non-profit organizations are not directly eligible; however, local jurisdictions may subcontract with 501(c)3 organizations to perform these functions for the sponsoring agency.



Q & A

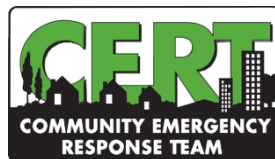
Can you please share what other counties or municipalities are using a Citizen Corps grant for?

The National Citizen Corps program operates as a broad umbrella initiative under FEMA. For full program details and guidance, please refer to the Citizen Corps information available on FEMA's website. Common Citizen Corps grants have included Fire Corps, Medical Reserve Corps, Neighborhood Watch, and America's PrepareAthon. There is a full detail of allowances in the CERT/CC Grant NOFO on volunteerflorida.org.

Current Grantees will have a one quarter overlap of grant from 2025-2026 grant if awarded the 2026-2027 grant. What documentation will be required differently?

Current grantees will have an overlap during Q4 (July–August) with the new grant cycle. When documenting any remaining invoices or volunteer hours/cost match, these must be kept completely separate. No volunteer hours, activities, or outreach may be duplicated across the 2 grant years.

We understand that the first quarter of the new grant may move slowly and spenddowns may also be delayed. You will need to report this to on your programmatic and PER grants.



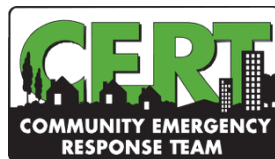
Q & A

If I have a different grant with Volunteer Florida will there be a issue with the overlap of those grants?

Grantees cannot use the same volunteer hours or cost match for multiple grants. Each grant must have its own distinct match. No duplication is allowed.

The FEMA AEL Equipment list for CERT/Citizen Corps, Can I use that AEL code?

When searching for the budgeted grant items in your proposed budget, look specifically for the exact item listed. If you have an item that is CERT or Citizen Corps specific, those items qualify to use the AEL code under Citizen Corps rather than being treated as general, non-listed items. Example would be a CERT Logo Backpack or CERT/CC kits that includes the helmet, goggles, flashlight, backpack, CERT/CC Vest. Those would qualify on the AEL list as a Citizen Corps item.



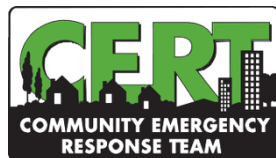
To Access the Application

www.volunteerflorida.org

Click on Grant opportunities then click on CERT.

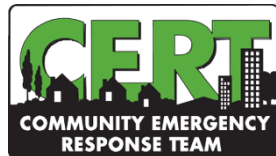
At the bottom of the Notice of Funding the application link is in green. Click on the application link.

- If you have not applied for VF CERT/CC grant in the 2025 calendar year, you will need to create a new account.
- After you create that account, close browser and open the application link again and sign in to see the CERT/CC application.



Questions & Answers Session

Please use the chat or hand
raising for any questions.



Thank you!

Further questions can be directed
to:

Robin Bridges, Emergency Management Deputy
Director, State CERT Program Manager

Robin@volunteerflorida.org

A link to the recorded webinar will be made
available on the Volunteer Florida website.

