

LA C.E.R.T. CODE OF CONDUCT

ALL VIOLATIONS OF THIS CODE OF CONDUCT AND APPLICABLE POLICIES UNDER THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES WILL BE THOROUGHLY INVESTIGATED. DURING THE INVESTIGATION PROCESS, INVOLVED MEMBERS WILL BE TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED FROM ALL CERT ACTIVITIES, PENDING THE OUTCOME OF THE INVESTIGATION. PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE INCLUDES, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, VERBAL COUNSELING, WRITTEN NOTICE AND RESTRICTION OF INVOLVEMENT WITH LAFD CERT PROGRAM ACTIVITIES, CERT COMMUNITY MEETINGS, QUARTERLY BUREAU TRAININGS, REFRESHERS, AND CALL OUTS. DISCIPLINE CAN AND MAY LEAD UP TO PERMANENT REMOVAL FROM THE LAFD CERT PROGRAM.

As a volunteer with the LAFD CERT program, you are expected to comply with the following:

1. If an emergency occurs in your presence, Dial 911 before rendering aid or assistance.
2. Remember, you are not a Firefighter, EMT, Paramedic, nor a Police Officer when functioning as a LAFD CERT member. You are trained to function in a supportive capacity for the LAFD, primarily as an extension of the fire department's response to CATASTROPHIC disasters at the bequest of emergency services officials.
3. DO NOT SELF-DEPLOY. Under the core objectives of the CERT program, you should address and tend to the needs of oneself, family/co-workers, home/business, and then neighbors/other colleagues. Deploying beyond your immediate neighborhood/place of business is considered self-deployment. LAFD CERT Call Out Team Members will be requested through the LAFD CERT Commander or the LAFD Disaster Preparedness Officer through the following avenues: Official Call Out Messaging, Voice, Text, Email, or through the Emergency Broadcasting System. LAFD ALERT Messaging of an incident (email, social media, radio etc.) are not official instructions or authorization to take action.
4. Stay within the scope of your training and capabilities. You have been trained under the curriculum of FEMA's Community Emergency Response Team program, and where applicable, received special skills training. Confine your actions to these guidelines and expectations.
5. Bring or wear your personal safety equipment: helmet, vest, dust mask, goggles, gloves (rubber/latex and leather), sturdy shoes, long pants, flashlight (with extra batteries), bottled water, non-perishable food, and applicable CERT forms. Bring any personal support items you deem appropriate. However, remember that shorts, sandals, and open-toed shoes are strictly forbidden. Inappropriate apparel is **NOT** allowed. Uniform standards adopted for the LAFD CERT Call Out Team shall be adhered to at all times.
6. Prior to engaging in a given action, make sure to factor in the level of your physical conditioning as well as potential resource limitations when responding as a member of CERT. Such limitations may be determined by, but not limited to: equipment available, physical abilities, knowledge, authority, and hazards. You are NOT expected to engage beyond your abilities.
7. Conduct yourself in a professional manner. Act appropriately and responsibly at all times. Do not indulge in obscene or uncivil language. Additionally, avoid altercations or untoward conduct, which might cause an adverse public reaction or result in an injury to another. Conduct yourself in a manner befitting the LAFD's highest standards.

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8. Treat fellow team members, visitors, guests, and other volunteer program participants with respect and courtesy.
9. Be sensitive and respectful to the diversity of team members and those we assist.
10. You are not authorized to make any statement, at any time regarding the nature or reason for deployment on behalf of the Los Angeles Fire Department, the LAFD CERT program, or the primary agency managing the incident. Direct all inquiries into incident details, missions, or requests for an official statement regarding the CERT program in Los Angeles, to the LAFD CERT Commander at 213-202-3136.
11. Respect the privacy of team members, persons served by the City of Los Angeles, Emergency Service Agencies and CERT. Hold in confidence all sensitive, private, and personal information.
12. Keep LAFD CERT leadership informed of any progress, concerns, or problems with tasks which you have been assigned.
13. Use of alcohol during activation, pending activation, participating in any LAFD CERT activities, or while actively representing the City of Los Angeles is strictly FORBIDDEN. Do not report for duty while under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, recreational drugs, or any intoxicating substances. Be cautious of the effects of your prescription medication. If your medication has physical restrictions, you must advise your team leader and remove yourself from deployment eligibility.

Use of any illegal substance at any time is immediate grounds for removal from the LAFD CERT program.

14. You are forbidden to carry guns, knives, handcuffs/restraining device, stun guns/Tasers, or other weapons. You may possess multi- purpose tools, pliers, screwdrivers, wrenches, and specialized approved tools. You have been trained for immediate disaster response and there is no need, place, or legal authorization for you to carry or use any of the above. To do so will jeopardize your own safety and the continued existence of the CERT program in Los Angeles.

Please note: Even if you can legally carry a firearm, you are not authorized to carry one while participating in LAFD CERT activities.

15. You shall not authorize the use of the name, emblem, endorsement, services or property of the City of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Fire Department, nor the LAFD CERT program, without the approval of the LAFD CERT Unit Commander.
16. You shall not accept, or seek on behalf of, any other person, any monetary gain, gifts, and/or benefits, offered as a result of your affiliation with the LAFD CERT program. Abstain from lending your name, as members of the Department, to any commercial or business enterprise, or approving and countenancing the use of the name and the prestige of the Department for any such purpose.
17. You shall not use your participation in the LAFD CERT program to promote any partisan politics, religious matters or positions on any issue.

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18. You shall avoid inappropriate conduct, both on and off-duty, that would jeopardize program effectiveness or tarnish the reputation of the program. Such behavior includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Offensive interactions or postings through social media, email, written text.
 - Public criticism of a fellow team member, team leader or CERT program, including members and leaders of other volunteer organizations.
 - Jeopardizing another team member's safety and welfare.
19. Any participation in illegal activity, charge and/or conviction, is grounds for immediate dismissal from the LAFD CERT program. *Such activities include driving while under the influence.*
20. You shall keep the LAFD CERT Unit informed of any concerns, uncertainty, and inappropriate activities. Such activities include that of current members, affiliated programs, agency members, and/or tasks assigned.
21. You are not permitted to smoke at any time or place where smoking is prohibited by law; nor shall you smoke on any Department apparatus or vehicle, or at fires or at emergencies. Reasonable exceptions may be made by the officer in charge when the emergency no longer exists, but shall not extend to permitting smoking on any Department apparatus or any vehicle at any time.
22. The Los Angeles Fire Department maintains a zero tolerance policy toward discrimination, harassment and retaliation, which means that the Department may take corrective actions up to and including dismissal from the LAFD CERT program when policy violations occur.

Every member in the Department (including CERT volunteers) is responsible for ensuring that the workplace is free of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, and is expected to avoid any behavior or conduct that could be interpreted as such. The Fire Department will strictly enforce this policy because all forms of discrimination based on any of the protected classes are illegal, unprofessional and disrespectful.

The Fire Department is committed to providing a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and professionalism. It is the policy of this Department to provide equal opportunities to all members and applicants on the basis of merit and to prevent discrimination, harassment, and retaliation in the workplace. Thus, every Department uniformed and civilian member are to treat one another in ways that mirror the respect we expect for ourselves. Each LAFD CERT participant is expected to monitor your own behavior and refrain from any action that will have a negative impact on others.

23. Regardless of severity, LAFD CERT members shall report all injuries or illness that is in direct result of their participation in LAFD CERT activities to the LAFD CERT Unit Commander.