



BYLAWS

**DES MOINES COUNTY
COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM
(CERT)**

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Article I. THE ASSOCIATION

Section A: Association

The name of this unincorporated, not for profit association shall be “Des Moines County CERT.” CERT stands for Community Emergency Response Team.

Upon adoption of these Bylaws, the name DMC SKYWARN will be officially included under the CERT umbrella and the operation of said group will be directed under the supervision of the CERT Communications Captain with the assistance of the CERT Chief.

Section B: Offices

The principal office of DES MOINES COUNTY CERT is in the State of Iowa and will be located at the Emergency Management Agency, in the City of Burlington, County of Des Moines.

Article II. Objectives of the CERT Organization

Section A: Objectives

- 1) To foster closer relations between the first responders of Des Moines County and each of its municipalities.
- 2) To promote general public knowledge of the functions, services, resources of CERT and the needs of Des Moines County and its cities during a disaster, and to encourage individuals and groups to seek them out when appropriate.
- 3) To promote awareness of and educate the public on Des Moines County CERT and to actively pursue further education and training to make our community safer, stronger, and better prepared to threats of natural disaster, public safety, and terrorism.
- 4) To carry out fundraising activities aimed at furthering these objectives and supporting the CERT unit located within Des Moines County.
- 5) Carry-out the mission statement of the Des Moines County Emergency Management Agency.

Article III. ORGANIZATION

Section A: Policies and Procedures

Established under separate documentation and officially adopted September, 2014.

Section B: Official Year

County fiscal year (July to June).

ARTICLE IV: BYLAWS

Section A: Amendments

These Bylaws shall supersede all previous editions and revisions of the Bylaws for Des Moines County CERT and/or DMC SKYWARN. Future changes to these Bylaws may only be authorized by the DMC CERT Board of Directors.

These Bylaws become effective on the date of the meeting in which they are adopted, as reflected by the date on the last page of this document. Any change to these Bylaws, no matter how minor, will result in a complete revision of the Bylaws and annotation of the new date. "Pen & ink" changes, separate-sheet changes, etc., are not permitted. These Bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed and new Bylaws may be adopted by a majority of the Board of Directors present at any regular meeting or at any special meeting.

Section B: Voting on Amendments

Exception(s) to this policy will be approved by majority of the DMC CERT Board of Directors and annotated within the official minutes of that meeting. Those minutes will be made a permanent attachment to the approved bylaws.

ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP

Section A: Eligibility

The Board of Directors shall admit to general CERT membership any person who is interested in the furtherance of the purposes of CERT and who satisfies the following eligibility requirements. Applicant must:

- 1) Be at least 18 years of age
- 2) Reside in or around Des Moines County
- 3) Have no felony convictions
- 4) Upon admission, be willing to wear a designated uniform and CERT identification card during authorized CERT or DMC SKYWARN events and training.
- 5) Must be willing to attend and pass the twenty (20) hour CERT membership course.
- 6) DMC SKYWARN applicants must attend the Basic Spotter Classroom Training. Individual mobile spotters must own a reliable, insured, personal vehicle, have a current valid driver's license. Spotters without a driver's license are not precluded from membership.
- 7) Must pass a background check.

Section B: Background Check Policy

The CERT Board of Directors will perform criminal background checks on all members enrolled on or after December 1, 2013. Members may have to submit information not specifically requested on the application form.

The Board may verify any information provided in the application process. The Board may conduct reference checks. The CERT Chief may release information to authorized partners, and/or employees of the partnering or governing agencies which may include, but are not limited to, information concerning past work, present work, attendance, evaluations, military service, criminal records, and any other personal record deemed necessary to verify the information provided in the application or during the selection

process. CERT will safeguard against the release of all confidential information to unauthorized partners. Supplying erroneous information or omitting pertinent information as part of the application process may be sufficient cause for non-acceptance. CERT members with regular access to children, persons age 60 and older, or individuals with disabilities will not have unsupervised contact while criminal registry checks are pending.

Section C: Opportunity to Respond to Background Check

If a person is denied or released from membership with CERT because of information obtained through a criminal background check, the person shall receive written notice of the reasons for denial and shall have an opportunity to respond to the reasons within sixty (60) days. Response shall be directed to the Board of Directors in writing, via e-mail, phone call, or in person at a special Board meeting if the circumstances allow.

Section D: Dress Code

Members will be issued logo shirts. For activations, sanctioned events, exercises, and trainings jeans (or cargo pants) and boots (or sturdy shoes) should be maintained by each individual. The Incident Commander may adopt a dress code for an event to coincide with the weather forecast and/or facility location.

Section E: Levels of Involvement and Training

Potential CERT members should indicate which level of involvement they intend to achieve after successful completion of core CERT training. Individuals successfully completing core CERT training and indicating Level I interest shall be made aware that if they desire to increase their involvement they have only to contact the Des Moines County Emergency Management Agency and determine the next scheduled meeting and begin attendance. If more than two (2) years have elapsed since they have taken core CERT training, the Board may require they take IS-317 and submit information indicating successful completion before consideration of Level II or higher membership status. At any time, an active Level II or III member may take the steps required to achieve Level III or IV training status.

Level I – Successful completion of core CERT course (20 hours formal training)

Interested in taking emergency response training to help family and neighbours and is not interested in on-going training or being part of any response team. No additional communication from DMC CERT.

Level II – Successful completion of core CERT course plus attendance of no less than four (4) meetings or events in each calendar year.

This training level has been designated to accommodate individuals interested in call out deployments with the CERT during emergency and non-emergency events, but these members do not necessarily want to attend all or most monthly CERT meetings and or training sessions. These members will receive minimum communication from the CERT Board to include notice of meetings and planned events.

Level III – Successful completion of core CERT training and NWS Storm Spotter class.

This training level has been designated to identify CERT members and the DMC SKYWARN team for their expanded functional role in the event of an emergency or disaster. Each member will maintain their Level III skills by annually attending a minimum total of six (6) of the following: monthly meetings, DMC SKYWARN activations, training opportunities, or non-emergency CERT and/or DMC SKYWARN events.

Level IV – All Level III requirements plus FCC Technician Class amateur radio privileges or higher, First Aid/CPR/AED certification and involvement in both CERT and DMC SKYWARN functions.

This training level has been designated to both enhance the effectiveness of CERT as a whole and to recognize CERT members for their expanded training and operational roles during an emergency, disaster, or planned event. Recognition of Level IV attainment may be in the form of training certificates on file and for display, as well as pins and/or patches which may be worn at CERT events when deemed appropriate by the Board.

DMC SKYWARN Spotters –

To serve as a member of SKYWARN, interested persons must annually attend the National Weather Service (NWS) Spotter class and must be able to authenticate successful completion of same to the CERT Chief or Communications Captain.

Members shall also commit to the following:

- Attend SKYWARN meetings and scheduled training
- Participate in the severe weather activations
- Participate in the weekly radio checks
- It is highly advised that at a minimum, all SKYWARN members complete the CERT Level I membership requirement

Section F: Termination of Members

In addition to attendance at the Annual Meeting, members are expected to complete at least three (3) of the following per calendar year to retain membership status:

- Monthly meeting attendance
- Sanctioned training events/activities
- Sanctioned event participation
- Sanctioned event Incident Commander
- Sanctioned training certification

Individual members may additionally be relieved by the Board of Directors for cause for below reasons:

- They have committed a crime or felony, or have been involved in a matter that is deemed serious enough in nature to conflict with CERT policies and procedures.
- Their conduct/demeanour has been embarrassing or unbecoming the conduct expected of a CERT team member in public or at a CERT function.
- They commit any other incident, situation, or offense that is construed by the Board to be in violation of or jeopardizes the CERT mission, integrity, effectiveness, or

safety of the public or other team members. Unsafe procedures will constitute grounds for dismissal.

Section G: Disciplinary Procedure

The Board of Directors will convene in a special meeting and determine the action to be taken as to removal. The individual shall be given a written notification advising him/her of the Board's decision within five (5) business days.

Section H: Grievance Procedure

Any of the above matters will be brought to the attention of the Board and the involved member will be given the opportunity to be heard within ninety (90) days for an appeal. Said appeal must be made in writing, via e-mail, phone call, or a special meeting with the Board.

The Board may decide to take action, or not, at the next scheduled meeting as dictated by the Board or at another special meeting where a quorum of Board members is present.

The individual shall be given a written notification advising him/her of the Board's decision via written mail, e-mail, or a phone call within five (5) business days. Additional appeals will be denied.

Section I: Leave of Absence

Members requiring a leave of absence must submit a written request to an officer of the Board of Directors. This Board member will direct the request to the appropriate channel. Said leave of absence will result in deletion of all team correspondence, either written or e-mail. Loss of membership time will additionally be deleted from actual membership time accumulated towards award certificates. Person will be officially listed as "on leave of absence".

Article VI. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section A: Enumeration of Board of Directors

The CERT Board of Directors is comprised of the Emergency Management Coordinator, the Emergency Management Coordinator's Assistant, the CERT Chief, Deputy Chief, Logistics Captain, and the Communications Captain. The CERT Chief is designated Chairperson of the Board of Directors.

The DMC CERT Board of Directors is hereby identified throughout this document as the "Board". A Scribe will be appointed to record minutes. If said Scribe is not a member of the said Board, this person shall have no voting privileges during the meeting.

Section B: Duties

These four Board members shall have full voting rights. Emergency Management representatives shall not have voting rights. Any tie in voting will be put to a second vote with the highest ranking member of the Board relinquishing his/her vote. The Board will

set objectives, strategies, and priorities for the team, maintain the Policies and Procedures Manual, and the Bylaws. Conflict of interest of any Board members will not be allowed. A conflict of interest is a set of circumstances that creates a risk that professional judgment or actions regarding a primary interest will be unduly influenced by a secondary interest as it pertains to the CERT organization. It may include access or acquisition of limited or conflicting resources such as, but not limited to: grants, federal, state or private funding, utilization of dual-membership volunteers, equipment and/or location, as well as intellectual and similar resources created by CERT and its members.

Section C: Quorum

A majority of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum and the majority of the Board present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be able to act on behalf of the Board.

Section D: Resignation

- Board members may resign, at their discretion, at any time.
- Resignations should be in writing, whenever possible.
- Resignations are requested to be at least sixty (60) days in advance to allow for the Board to locate a qualified replacement.

Section E: Termination of Board Members

Should any Board member fail to attend three consecutive, scheduled, monthly meetings without a valid excuse, or fail to attend at least seventy-five percent of the scheduled membership meetings in any twelve consecutive month period, their membership shall be terminated. The Board determining that the member is ineffectual in their leadership capacity is also grounds for removal from office. The remaining Board members will notify the member in question within thirty (30) days of their meeting as to their decision. The member will have an opportunity to be heard at a Board meeting before removal, unless the member's location is unknown. Said appeal will be given to the Board via mail, e-mail, or phone within ninety (90) days.

Article VII. Meetings and Voting

Section A: Annual Meeting

Annual meetings of members are to be held in June, at a minimum of one per year, to transact such matters as deemed proper by the Board of Directors. The Board shall designate the time and place of the annual member meeting. Failure to hold an annual meeting in a timely manner shall in no way affect the Board of Directors or the validity of CERT's actions.

All CERT meetings, Board or General Membership, and voting will be conducted in accordance with the latest edition of Roberts' Rules of Order.

Section B: Board Meetings

The Board of Directors may designate any place within Des Moines County, Iowa, as the place of meeting for any annual and/or quarterly meeting or for any special meeting called by the Board. Written notice stating the place, date and time of any meeting of the Board will be delivered, either personally, by phone, by mail, or email to each member no less than ten (10) or not more than fifty (50) days before the date of the meeting.

Section C: Special Meetings

Special general membership meetings may only be called by the Board. Notice must be given personally or by phone, by mail, or by e-mail to the members no less than 72 hours prior to the date of the meeting, stating the place, time, and purpose of each special meeting.

Section D: Membership Meetings

CERT monthly meetings will endeavour be held on the first Tuesday of each month at a designated time and place. DMC SKYWARN will endeavour to hold meetings monthly from April through June on the third Tuesday of each month at a designated time and place. These meetings may include training, planning, and exercises unless otherwise provided for on an alternate day.

Section E: Notice of Meetings

Notice stating the place, date, hour, and duration of any meeting shall be given to all members. Such notice shall be delivered personally, by phone, by mail, or by email, not less than 7 days before the date of the meeting, except for notice of Special Meetings. An agenda for the meetings will be made available electronically, for those members requesting it, via e-mail. Extra copies of the agenda will be available at the meeting.

Section F: Quorum for General Membership Meetings

A majority of current, eligible members, present at a General Membership meeting constitutes a quorum. Once a meeting of the quorum of members has convened, subsequent withdrawal by some members shall not affect the validity of any action taken at the meeting, even if the number of members drops below the number of members required for a quorum.

Section G: Monthly Meeting Minutes

Minutes will be taken at each monthly meeting, approved by the Chief, and e-mailed to all members on file at a date no later than one week after the meeting.

Section H: Trainings

The goal of CERT training is to teach members to care for themselves, their family members, and their neighbors during an event while also being available to assist as needed in community events both emergency and planned. The Board of Directors is mandated to provide training and will endeavour to keep members' certifications current.

Article VIII. OFFICERS

Section A: Enumeration of Officers

CERT Chief; CERT Deputy Chief; Logistics Captain; Communications Captain

Section B: Election / Appointment

The CERT Chief and Deputy Chief will be elected by the CERT general membership (which as of this writing includes DMC Skywarn section of Communications). These persons must be a member in good standing for at least one (1) year of both the DMC CERT and DMC SKYWARN.

The Logistics Captain and Communications Captain will be appointed by the CERT Chief and the CERT Deputy Chief. Logistics Captain must be a member in good standing of DMC CERT for a period of at least one (1) year.

The Communications Captain must be a member in good standing of both DMC CERT and DMC SKYWARN for a period of at least one (1) year. In addition the Communications Captain must hold a current FCC amateur radio license, of technician class or higher, for one year prior to appointment.

Section C: Term of Office

The CERT Chief will serve for a term of two (2) years. Term will expire on June 30 of the even numbered year.

The CERT Deputy Chief will serve for a term of one (1) year. After serving one year the term of office this position will move to a two (2) year election. Term will expire on June 30 of the odd numbered year.

The Logistics Captain and Communications Captain will serve for a period of two (2) years. The Logistics Captain term will expire on June 30 of the even numbered year. The Communications Captain term will expire on June 30 of the odd numbered year and after serving one year term of office this position will move to a two (2) appointment.

Section D: Compensation

Chiefs and Captains or other volunteers shall not receive financial compensation. They serve on a volunteer basis. Reimbursement for approved expenditures that are not donations are exceptions to this rule.

Section E: Vacancies

The Deputy Chief shall assume all responsibilities in the event of a vacancy on the Board until said position is filled.

ARTICLE IX: DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section A: CERT Chief

By assisting with the day to day activities and responsibilities of CERT, the Chief will be the primary point of contact for the CERT organization and have overall responsibility for the group. The Chief shall organize and chair all CERT meetings, coordinate activities of all section Captains, and serve as Incident Commander for planned CERT

events (unless otherwise specified), and be the original point of contact from the Emergency Management Coordinator for CERT activation of any type.

Section B: CERT Deputy Chief

The Deputy Chief will assume the Chief duties in the event that the Chief is unable to be present. In the CERT Chief's absence at a disaster situation, the Deputy Chief will serve as Operations Chief at the scene. With the assistance/approval of the Chief, the Deputy will additionally prepare and distribute the monthly meeting agenda.

Section C: Operations Captain

Operations duties will be the dual responsibility of both the Chief and the Deputy Chief. In the absence of the Chief, the responsibilities will fall to the Deputy Chief with final approval, or authority, lying with the Chief.

Section D: Logistics Captain

The Logistics Captain will be responsible for finance and supplies. He/she will provide the Chief with quarterly inventory of supplies and financial status data for general membership information purposes.

Section E: Communications Captain

The Communications Captain will be responsible for resources, scheduling and deployment of communication resources and scheduling for Weather Operations. The Communications Captain, with the CERT Chief being present, shall chair the monthly DMC SKYWARN meetings during the months of April through June. The Captain will additionally prepare and distribute the monthly DMC SKYWARN meeting agenda and meeting minutes. They will also be responsible for reviewing and maintain operations and procedures manuals.

Article X. FINANCES, ASSETS, and ACCOUNTABILITY

Section A: Accounts

The CERT financial account will remain with the Des Moines County Emergency Management Agency. A separate line item in the budget is established for CERT expenses and income. The EM Coordinator will provide a quarterly report to the Logistics Captain or his/her designee.

Section B: Budget

The EMA Coordinator shall inform the Board of Directors in writing no less than sixty (60) days as to the internal deadline for budget submittal; any and all issues, parameters or working amounts to be addressed as well as any changes made from the prior year's Budget Format. At which time, each officer shall begin the process of drafting a summary of all expenses, projects, and other considerations falling under their purview that may fall under the oversight of the budget in whole.

The Board shall then meet no less than thirty (30) days prior to the deadline to discuss and outline the draft budget; its correlating expenses, pending projects, the adding or

removing items from prior budget line items and otherwise creating a working document from which the Logistics Captain can then continue the process of defining, detailing, refining, and amending to the best of their understanding of the requirements.

The Board shall then hold as many meetings and reviews as agreed as necessary to meet the deadline and submit a satisfactory budget for final inclusion of the EM Coordinator into the master budget for the Emergency Management Agency.

The CERT Budget once approved will be made available for general review as a minimum to all committees and or project managers associated in the budget, if not the entire member base as a whole.

This same process will be used for grant applications and be based upon grant performance deadlines.

Section C: Donations

All cash donations will be designated in the annual Emergency Management budget towards CERT.

All other donations will remain the property of the Emergency Management Agency. Items donated specifically to CERT will remain available and under the purview of the Board.

ARTICLE XI. Waiver of Liability

Non-members may not participate in CERT events as they do not possess the training, equipment, or psychological ability to handle the tasks they may be undertaking, thereby becoming a liability. Spontaneous volunteers at a disaster who are willing to help must be interviewed and placed on a team or in a position where their skills can be utilized. At the time of the interview they must sign a waiver of liability. No person under the age of eighteen (18) is allowed to volunteer under our organization.

ARTICLE XII: Equipment and Maintenance

DMC Emergency Management will provide and maintain equipment and a communications system adequate to allow for effective operations of designated activities and events. Members are responsible for appropriate care of equipment in their possession and will be held responsible for damage due to abuse, neglect, or unauthorized use.

ARTICLE XIII. Dissolution

In the event of dissolution, all of the assets and property of CERT and DMC SKYWARN remaining after payment of necessary expenses and the satisfaction of all liabilities shall be returned to the Des Moines County Emergency Management Commission.

These bylaws are hereby adopted by a majority vote of the Des Moines County Emergency Management Commission, as of this ____ day, of _____ (month), _____ (year).

Hans K. Trousil
Mayor City of West Burlington
Chair, Des Moines County
Emergency Management Commission

Attest:

Gina M. Hardin
Coordinator, Des Moines County
Emergency Management Agency