

Martinez Area CERT Code of Conduct

The Martinez Area CERT Program is a well-respected and active CERT program in Contra Costa County. Although not paid government employees, as CERT members we represent our communities and are expected to abide by a reasonable Code of Conduct. It is important to recognize that our activities are a reflection of CERT to new members, to the public and to those to whom we render our services. **This Code of Conduct applies to all CERT activities, whether involving deployments, training, or public relations events.**

Martinez Area CERT program maintains a zero-tolerance policy regarding any discrimination, harassment and retaliation. The over-riding premise herein is that CERT members conduct themselves in a professional, respectful, adult manner always, **avoiding inappropriate statements, false statements, negative comments, actions or criticisms** related to other CERT members or when participating in CERT activities.

Martinez Area CERT is committed to equal opportunities for all members and applicants solely based on merit. Thus, CERT members must treat one another with mutual respect.

CERT members shall never make any improper statements, sexist comments, negative comments, or state anything related to gender, ethnicity, color, religion, age, disability, national origin, sexual orientation or make or produce any other offensive materials. Members shall treat everyone with respect and courtesy, and shall avoid public criticism. This standard also applies to media posts.

ALL VIOLATIONS OF THIS CODE OF CONDUCT AND APPLICABLE POLICIES, AFTER BEING BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE, WILL BE FOLLOWED UP AND INVESTIGATED BY THE MARTINEZ POLICE DEPARTMENT LIAISON OFFICER.

DURING THE INVESTIGATION, INVOLVED CERT MEMBERS MAY BE TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED FROM ALL CERT ACTIVITIES, PENDING THE OUTCOME OF THE INVESTIGATION. THE PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PROCESS WILL BE USED AND INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO, VERBAL COUNSELING, WRITTEN NOTICE AND

RESTRICTION OF INVOLVEMENT WITH CERT PROGRAM ACTIVITIES. DISCIPLINE MAY ALSO INCLUDE PERMANENT REMOVAL FROM THE CERT PROGRAM.

As participants in the Martinez Area CERT program, all members are expected to comply with the following:

- 1. SAFETY SHALL BE THE OVER-RIDING PRIORITY AT ANY CERT EVENT.** Any CERT member on a deployment or during training may stop an activity for safety concerns. The team shall review the activity to assure it is safe and within the CERT scope of practice, then the team leader shall decide how to proceed. No member can be compelled to participate in any activity which that member believes to be unsafe.
2. At any time, if an emergency occurs in your presence, call 911 and request appropriate fire, police and EMS resources, then render aid or assistance.
3. As a rule, CERT members do not self-deploy. When a sudden major event occurs, such as an earthquake, severe storm, major fire or other widespread event, under the core objectives of the CERT program, first address and tend to the needs or evacuation of yourself, family/co-workers, home/business, and then neighbors/other colleagues. CERT members can also be requested to mobilize and respond by the Martinez Police Department Watch Commander or City EOC using the Nixle Alert System or CWS Community Warning System. **In events of such magnitude that normal forms of communications are compromised, CERT members may presume they are activated and are requested to respond to their zone assembly locations for organized deployment.**
4. The National Incident Command System (ICS) is an integral part of CERT's protocol and members shall respect their Chain-Of-Command when participating in any CERT events.
5. Members have been trained under the curriculum of FEMA's Community Emergency Response Team program and received special skills training, such as the use of radios, traffic and crowd control management. Members will act within your CERT scope of practice.

6. When deploying or during training, members will wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). A CERT vest and sturdy shoes are required at deployments and training, **sandals and open-toed shoes are forbidden.** Helmet, backpack or bag, masks, goggles, gloves (rubber/non-latex or leather) and long pants are required. Have a flashlight (with extra batteries), bottled water and non-perishable food when on a deployment or during training. Bring any other personal support items you deem appropriate. Apparel should not display anything unrelated to CERT. In some CERT Activities, the use of CERT ball caps hats in lieu of helmets are acceptable when approved by the CERT Incident Commander (I.C.).

7. Members involved in any CERT activity - be sure you consider your level of 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, the number of team members present, equipment available, physical abilities, knowledge, authority, and hazards. You are NOT expected to engage in any activity beyond your abilities or training.

8. Do not use profane, obscene or uncivil language. Avoid altercations, confrontational conduct and open criticism. Disagreements or differences of opinion not an immediate safety issue, particularly during a training session, are to be discussed privately one on one. **Even a veiled threat of violence is cause for removal from the CERT program.**

9. You may inform members of the public as to the general nature of a CERT deployment, such as giving a basic description of a missing person while conducting a search. Fliers or other published materials provided by the Police or Fire Departments may also be given to the public unless you have been instructed otherwise. Any questions from the media shall be directed to CERT Incident Command person and/or PD I.C.

10. Respect the privacy of team members, persons served by the City of Martinez, Emergency Service Agencies and CERT. Hold in confidence all sensitive, private, and personal information.

11. Keep CERT leadership informed of any progress, concerns, or problems with tasks which you have been assigned.

12. Do not report for CERT activities while under the influence of any intoxicating or mood-altering substances. Be cautious of the effects of your prescription medication. If your medication has physical restrictions or causes impairments, you must advise your team leader and remove yourself from CERT activity when appropriate.
13. Do not carry guns (even if licensed to carry), knives (except pocketknives with a foldable blade 4" or smaller), handcuffs, restraining devices, stun guns, Tasers, or other such weapons during CERT activities. You may carry multi-purpose tools, pliers, screwdrivers, wrenches, and specialized approved tools. You may carry Mace or Pepper Spray according to California law.
14. You shall not use your participation in the CERT program to promote any partisan politics, religious matters, or positions on any issue.
15. At no time shall a CERT member attempt to use their membership in the program to evade citation, arrest, or other law enforcement action.
16. Any arrest, charge and/or conviction is grounds for immediate suspension and/or possible dismissal from the CERT program. *Such activities include driving while under the influence.* Obey all traffic laws while responding to, participating in, and returning from CERT activities.
17. You shall keep the CERT Leader(s), Steering Committee or Zone Coordinator(s) informed of any concerns and/or inappropriate activities by current CERT members, affiliated programs, agency members, and/or about tasks assigned.
18. Smoking is prohibited at any CERT activity.
19. Regardless of severity, CERT members shall report all injuries or illnesses that are a direct result of their participation in CERT activities to the Incident Commander or person in charge.
20. Specialized tools issued to a CERT member during a deployment, such as radios or tools from a response trailer or neighborhood container shall be returned upon completion of the deployment.

21. This Martinez CERT Code of Conduct is a living document and can be updated or amended at any time with approval from the City of Martinez Chief of Police or other sponsor agency. If this document is amended, copies will be furnished to all members.

Acknowledgement:

I _____ do hereby certify that I
(*Print your name*)
have read, understand and agree to abide by the above code of conduct. I understand that failure on my part to comply with any of this code could result in the termination of my volunteer service on the Community Emergency Response Team.

Volunteer Signature: _____

Martinez CERT Witness: _____

On this date: _____