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1.0 Mission

To make the Georgia Institute of Technology (GT) better prepared for and to respond to emergency/disaster situations.

2.0 Purpose

To establish procedures for the activation, notification, coordination, capabilities and responsibilities of GeorgiaTech-Campus Emergency Response Team (GT-CERT) members. To develop a core group of campus volunteers to assist on campus during emergencies.

3.0 Membership

3.1 Eligibility

All faculty, staff and students associated with the Georgia Institute of Technology are eligible to apply for participation as a member of the GT-CERT program. Affiliate members (spouses, neighbors and friends) will be permitted to join on a case-by-case basis.

3.2 Qualifications

The Georgia Tech Police Department (GTPD) Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP) reserves the right to screen all applicants to determine suitability for the volunteer position and may apply reasonable standards as a condition for the appointment and continuing maintenance of membership. GT-CERT members operate at the will of the appointing authority and may be relieved of duty with or without cause if deemed necessary for the good of the program.

3.3 Status

GT-CERT members possess no special powers beyond that of acting in the capacity of “Good Samaritans” and are covered under the Volunteer Protection Act of 1977 while deployed under the direction and control of the GT OEP during an actual emergency or other authorized event.

3.3.1 “Good Samaritan” law

GT-CERT members functioning in emergency services are generally protected by “Good Samaritan” laws that protect people who provide emergency care in a prudent and reasonable manner.
3.3.2 Volunteer Protection Act of 1977

In a disaster, GT-CERT members are also protected by the Volunteer Protection Act of 1977, a Federal law that protects volunteers from liability as long as they are acting in accordance with the training that they have received.

4.0 General Instructions

The GT-CERT program emphasizes a neighbor helping neighbor approach with training and program maintenance directed through GT OEP.

GT-CERT members may be activated or called upon, but not limited to:

1. Natural Disasters
2. Technological Hazards
3. Man-Made or Terrorist Incidents

5.0 GT-CERT Role

GT-CERT volunteers are not intended to replace professional emergency responders, nor constitute the university’s primary emergency response capability. Rather, they serve as an important volunteer supplement to it and complement and enhance first-response capability when at the scene of an emergency by ensuring the safety of themselves and others until first responders arrive. GT-CERT volunteers can then assist first-response personnel as directed. GT-CERT members may be utilized in the following roles on campus or in the Atlanta community:

- Serve as exercise participants and volunteers
- Serve as building drill evaluators and monitors
- Assist GT building staff in programming NOAA weather radios
- Assist in emergency preparedness campaigns and literature distribution (special events, new student orientation, move-in days, sporting events, etc)
- Assist in missing person searches
- Assist GT in human and animal sheltering operations
- Assist damage assessment teams during large-scale disasters
- Assist in placing traffic barricades and with traffic control at static barricades
- Respond to disasters as needed
- Assist in the Emergency Operation Center
- Provide light search and rescue
- Assist with triage and medical first aid
- Assist with health related situations, including vaccine clinic support

GT-CERT members should not participate in any activities beyond their training and/or capability.
6.0 Safety Concerns

GT-CERT volunteers should keep their safety in mind as their first priority. GT-CERT volunteers should know their capabilities and the limitations of their training and equipment and work within those limitations as taught within the curriculum of the GT-CERT training program. **GT-CERT volunteers are never expected to place themselves into harmful situations. Furthermore, GT-CERT volunteers are never obligated to participate in any GT-CERT activity, exercise and incident response.**

7.0 Activation

1. For emergencies or incidents that occur on campus within the member’s purview, they should always immediately call 911 from a landline or 4040-894-2500 from a cell phone prior to offering to assist. The GT-CERT member should then only assist up to their level of training and capability and then standby for Emergency Responders.
2. Typically, GT-CERT members will be activated by GT OEP in the event emergency services within the communities are overwhelmed. GT-CERT teams are designed to take action and provide care and support throughout campus within the Incident Command System.
3. GT-CERT members are not emergency services personnel as defined by state law and as such are not exempt from federal, state, and local laws when responding to emergencies. Therefore, all GT-CERT members must use due care and diligence when responding or reporting, as directed, to emergencies.
4. GT-CERT member should be advised of the nature of the emergency, the number of GT-CERT members needed, and the staging location for operations when assisting emergency response agencies. Typically, GT-CERT members would report to the Georgia Tech Police Department or Emergency Operations Center to receive guidance and assignments.

8.0 Notification

Members should be notified of developing situations in their neighborhoods/communities that may require their services or activation. Communication media may include, but not be limited to:

1. Radio Communications
2. Television Communications
3. Telephone Communications
4. Georgia Tech Emergency Notification System (GTENS)

9.0 Coordination

1. GT-CERT members responding to a disaster on campus, or at the request of GT OEP for special events or circumstances, must work within the Incident Command System for direction and leadership.
2. Community activated GT-CERT members should be directed by the emergency response agencies whether on scene or through available communications. GT-CERT members are only authorized to respond to community emergencies as directed by local emergency response agencies, and under the initial direction of GTPD and/or GT OEP.

3. Activities of GT-CERT members should be relayed frequently to the on-scene emergency response agencies.

4. In the event of a catastrophic disaster which results in the temporary loss of communications, all available GT-CERT members are to report to a staging area or the Incident Command Post, as designated by emergency response agencies and await further instructions.

10.0 Capabilities

1. GT-CERT volunteers are trained to perform the following operations:
   a. Light search and rescue
   b. Fire extinguishment on small controllable fires
   c. Basic triage of trauma victims
   d. Establishing safe evacuation areas

2. GT-CERT volunteers are trained to assist local emergency response agencies as directed, but always within the Incident Command System

11.0 Restrictions

Under no conditions should GT-CERT volunteers:

- Suppress large fires
- Enter structures that they consider heavily damaged and dangerous
- Perform hazardous material cleanup or respond to incidents involving radiological, chemical or biological agents
- Perform medical, fire or search and rescue operations beyond their level of training
- Activate or deploy without having first reported for assignment to the incident commander, field supervisor, or other designated emergency point of contact
- Perform any activity beyond their training, capability or comfort level.

12.0 Responsibilities

GT-CERT members must comply with the requirements of GT-CERT training, as well as complying with all federal, state, and local laws when functioning as a GT-CERT member. These requirements are established through the GT-CERT curriculum and GA Tech Emergency Preparedness and include, but are not limited to:

1. Completing a GT-CERT Application Form.
2. Completing a Release of Liability Form.
3. Satisfactory completion of GT-CERT Basic Course.
4. Maintaining competencies by attending future GT-CERT refresher/sustainment training sessions and team meetings.
5. Upon graduation, GT-CERT members should have their CERT Kits with them on campus, and upon activation, bring it with them.
6. GT-CERT members must contact the GT-CERT Coordinator with changes in employment, and contact information when relevant.

13.0 Training

Prior to becoming a GT-CERT member, all applicants must successfully complete a basic course of instruction in a Georgia Tech approved FEMA based CERT class. The course should be a minimum of 20 hours and cover the following:

- Disaster Preparedness
- Fire Safety
- Disaster Medical Operations – Triage and Treating Life Threatening Injuries
- Disaster Medical Operations – Assessment, Treatment and Hygiene
- Light Search and Rescue Operations
- CERT Organization
- Disaster Psychology
- Terrorism and CERT
- Course Review and Disaster Simulation
- Georgia Tech Office of Emergency Preparedness will keep training files on each GT-CERT member:
  - Application
  - Course Completion Certificate
  - Liability Waiver
  - Additional Training Completed

14.0 Classroom Attendance

GT-CERT members are required to complete the entire training program.

15.0 Departmental Approval

All GT faculty and staff must obtain prior permission or approval from their appropriate supervisor in order to participate in the GT-CERT classes that occur during normal GT work hours.
16.0 Required Activities

GT-CERT volunteers should attend periodic meetings and annual refresher training sessions in order to maintain their knowledge, skills and abilities. Members should maintain all issued equipment, restock perishable items and acquire such additional tools or supplies as may be required.

17.0 GT-CERT Organization

The program coordinator may designate Senior Team Leaders, whose primary task shall be to act as organizers to help maintain and perpetuate the GT-CERT program by assisting with the recruiting, training and maintenance of the volunteer pool. Senior Team Leaders are expected to perform a leadership role, rather than a supervisory role and report directly to the GT-CERT Coordinator. Some GT-CERT members may be asked to participate in advanced training to work specific jobs in the EOC; these volunteers must consent to a more detailed background check.

18.0 Disaster Exercise

GT-CERT members should participate in a final exercise in order to complete the program. The final exercise will involve a scenario that tests the knowledge and skills that GT-CERT participants learned during the basic training course. The exercise will be conducted in a realistic manner in order to provide participants with a simulated “real world” scenario that involves immediate decision making opportunities and use of available resources and manpower. GT-CERT members are encouraged to participate in additional drills and exercises to maintain competencies.

19.0 Graduation

All GT-CERT members who successfully complete the training segments and the field exercise will receive a certificate of GT-CERT course completion. The GT-CERT Coordinator will maintain an active and current call list to facilitate notification of GT-CERT members should they be activated for an emergency or non-emergency situation. All GT-CERT members who graduate should provide the GT-CERT Coordinator with updated emergency contact information.