



Partnering with Citizen Corps

Citizen Corps is the Department of Homeland Security's grassroots movement to actively involve everyone in America in making our communities and our nation safer, stronger, and better prepared for all hazards and threats. We all have a role in hometown security and Citizen Corps provides local opportunities for everyone to **prepare, train and volunteer!**

How can we get involved with Citizen Corps?

The first step to partnering with Citizen Corps is to contact your local Citizen Corps Council. They will be able to inform you of current activities that you can collaborate on in your community and work with you to develop new outreach ideas.

The Citizen Corps Council brings together the homeland security expertise of the local emergency responders with the energy and spirit of volunteers, the private sector, elected officials and other community stakeholders. These Councils build on existing community resources to develop a comprehensive strategic plan to foster a stronger connection between citizens and local emergency responders and to involve all residents of the community in preparedness, training and volunteer support.

Citizen Corps activities are tailored to the unique attributes of the community and take into account the community's potential threats, needs, geography, population density and population composition. By connecting to local Citizen Corps Councils, stations will connect directly to range of emergency response services and be able to help with educating and preparing the public. In addition to the local Council contact, there is also a State point of contact for Citizen Corps who can provide you with statewide information.

To contact your local or state Citizen Corps Council, go to www.citizencorps.gov and click on the homepage link to find the Council nearest you.

Citizen Corps Program Funding

As a component of the Homeland Security Grant Program, DHS provides Citizen Corps funding to states to support state and local Councils with all-hazards planning, public education and communication, training, exercises, equipment, management of Citizen Corps programs and activities and equipping volunteers who have a role in disaster response. This funding may be used to:

- develop and implement a plan for the community to engage all citizens in hometown security, community preparedness and family safety;
- conduct public education and outreach in order to inform the public about their role in emergency preparedness for all hazards, and public health measures, including bioterrorism, and to encourage personal responsibility and action;
- enable citizens to participate in exercises and receive training and equipment.
- bring together local leadership to form and sustain a Citizen Corps Council;
- develop and implement Citizen Corps programs to offer training and volunteer opportunities to support emergency management and emergency responders, disaster relief organizations, and community safety efforts. Include in your partnerships: Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), Neighborhood Watch, Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS), Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), Fire Corps and Citizen Corps affiliates.

Funding Public Education/Outreach

Citizen Corps Councils may develop or reproduce public education and outreach materials to educate and engage the public, conduct outreach, and hold community events. Citizen Corps funding may also be used to develop alert/warning communications for the public, and to tailor those materials and communications to special needs populations – an excellent fit for a partnership with public television! Consider creating a working group at your station composed of people from your programming, outreach, funding, and digital services departments. In addition to your programming, using your digital services to perform an outreach and education role will demonstrate the full spectrum of benefits that public television can provide to your community in conjunction with Citizen Corps.

Allowable expenditures for education and outreach include materials to support a public awareness campaign, media coverage, outreach activities, and public events, such as: public safety announcements, printed advertising and other materials that either educate the public, or recognize and support Citizen Corps partners and participants. All materials must include the Citizen Corps logo whenever possible.

Funding Citizen Participation/Volunteer Programs

One of the goals for Citizen Corps Councils is to provide volunteer service opportunities across all emergency prevention, preparedness and response disciplines, for community safety efforts, and for disaster relief. When working with Citizen Corps, funding may be used to establish or enhance volunteer program and volunteer recruitment efforts for Neighborhood Watch, CERT, VIPS, MRC and Fire Corps, or for other homeland security efforts at the state and local level. You can also provide outreach and training activities that bolster your Citizen Corps Council. To assist local communities with engaging volunteers, Citizen Corps funds can also be used to recruit, train, and motivate volunteers.

Funding Training

Training is a central component of the Citizen Corps mission and training funding by these grants can include all-hazards safety such as:

- emergency preparedness
- basic first aid
- life saving skills
- crime prevention and terrorism awareness
- safety in the home
- CPR and AED training
- public health issues
- prevention
- Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)
- search and rescue skills
- community relations
- volunteer management

Training can be delivered in venues throughout the community, including schools, neighborhood associations, places of worship, NGOs and government locations – help your Citizen Corps Council connect with your institutional partners. Draw on your experience in serving diverse communities by insuring that specific consideration is made to include all ages, ethnic and cultural groups, persons with disabilities and special needs populations. Stations are great partners to help Citizen Corps incorporate informal learning methodologies such as the Internet, distance learning, home study, and to leverage existing training provided via educational/professional facilities. Pilot courses and innovative approaches to training citizens are encouraged.