



# TSI CERT Training Program

## Basic CERT Course



The Basic CERT Course is required for anyone wanting to become a CERT or CERT Instructor. There are no prerequisites to the Basic CERT Course, but many programs require members to complete ICS 100, 200 and 700. Programs may also require that people formally join the CERT program before completing Basic CERT training, while other programs conduct the training as a community service with people having the option of joining the CERT program after completing the training. Basic CERT Training is broken up into individual modules, and takes a minimum of 32 hours to complete (typically divided into three 8 hour days, with the drill taking up a fourth 8 hour day). The training can take longer if modules are expanded to include issues related to local response, or optional modules such as HAM radio or animals in disaster.

**Unit 1: Disaster Preparedness** (2.5 hrs). Topics include (in part) identifying local disaster threats, disaster impact, mitigation and preparedness concepts, and an overview of Citizen Corps and CERT. Hands on skills include [team-building](#) exercises (optional).

**Unit 2: Fire Safety** (2 hrs). Students learn about fire chemistry, mitigation practices, [hazardous materials](#) identification, suppression options, and are introduced to the concept of size-up. Hands-on skills include practicing shutting off utilities, using a [fire extinguisher](#) to suppress a live flame, and wearing basic protective gear.

**Unit 3: Disaster Medical Operations part 1** (2.5 hrs). Students learn to identify and treat certain life-threatening conditions in a disaster setting, as well as [START triage](#). Hands-on skills include performing head-tilt/chin-lift, glove removal, practicing bleeding control techniques (optional), and performing triage as an exercise.

**Unit 4: Disaster Medical Operations part 2** (3.5 hrs). Topics cover mass casualty operations, public health, assessing patients, and treating injuries. Students practice patient assessment, and various treatment techniques.

**Unit 5: Light Search and Rescue Operations** (3.5 hrs). Size-up is expanded as students learn about assessing structural damage, marking structures that have been searched, search techniques, as well as rescue techniques and [cribbing](#). Hands-on activities include lifting and cribbing an object, search and rescue with integrated triage, and practicing rescue carries.

**Unit 6: CERT Organization** (1.5 hrs). Students are introduced to several concepts from the Incident Command System, and local team organization and communication is explained. Hands-on skills include a table-top or field exercise focusing on incident command and control.

**Unit 7: Disaster Psychology** (1 hr). Responder [well-being](#) and dealing with victim [trauma](#) are the topics of this unit.

**Unit 8: Terrorism and CERT** (2 hrs). Students learn how [terrorists](#) may choose targets, what weapons they may use, and identifying when [chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive](#) weapons may have been deployed. Students learn about CERT roles in preparing for and responding to terror attacks.

**Unit 9: Course Review, Exam, and Makeup** (2.5 hrs) Review course material and discuss the drill. Students then take a written exam (Optional – program specific) as well as complete any makeup.

**Unit 10: Disaster Simulation** (4 hrs). Students participate in a real-time practical disaster simulation where the different skill areas are put to the test. A critique follows the exercise where students and instructors have an opportunity to learn from mistakes and highlight exemplary actions. Students may be given a certificate of completion at the conclusion of the course.

**NOTE:** Hour totals are average approximations based on groups of up to 20 students. Larger groups will take longer per module.

## Class Format

TSI offers the Basic CERT course in two different formats depending on the needs of the CERT program. The two formats are specific to each module, and modules can be mixed and matched in order to create a custom format if so desired.

### Basic Format

The Basic class format means that each module is delivered in its unaltered form and each powerpoint is exactly how FEMA developed it with no additions or modifications whatsoever.

### Enhanced Format

According to official FEMA guidelines, CERT training units can be customized to meet specific program needs as long as no FEMA content is removed, only added to. Through our experience with our own CERT programs and delivering the training we have discovered ways to make the training more effective and engaging, and have added this new information to the course. Enhanced units do not add any additional time or cost, and can be interchanged with Basic units. Unless specifically requested otherwise, the Enhanced format is our standard format.

### Differences in Class Time

There is only marginal difference in total class time between Basic Format and Enhanced Format. All TSI materials include time estimates for the Enhanced Format, with the Basic Format being only slightly shorter.

### Course Materials

Both the Basic and Enhanced courses use the same core materials, which can be supplied by TSI for all courses at no additional cost. These materials, including powerpoints and student guides are available for free download directly from FEMA. Our enhanced courses feature additional material, we include copies of these slides with each class we teach to

ensure programs can continue to teach to the same standards. We update these slides every 2 to 4 years, or whenever a new FEMA update occurs.

## Class Schedule

The Basic CERT Class can be organized in a variety of different ways to fit specific scheduling needs. The most common and one of the most effective is breaking it up into 4 full days. A sample schedule for this format is listed below:

Day 1	
Unit 1: Disaster Preparedness	9:00 - 11:30
Lunch Break	11:30 - 12:30
Unit 2: Fire Safety	12:30 - 2:30
Unit 3: Disaster Medical Part 1	2:30 - 5:00
Day 2	
Unit 4: Disaster Medical Part 2	9:00 - 12:30
Lunch Break	12:30 - 1:30
Unit 5: Light Search & Rescue	1:30 - 5:00
Day 3	
Unit 6: CERT Organization	9:00 - 10:30
Unit 7: Disaster Psychology	10:30 - 11:30
Lunch Break	11:30 - 12:30
Unit 8: Terrorism & CERT	12:30 - 2:30
Unit 9: Review, Exam, Makeup	2:30 - 5:00
Day 4	
Drill Setup (Drill Staff Only)	9:00 - 11:00
Lunch Break (Drill Staff Only)	11:00 - 12:00
Students Arrive & Briefing	12:00 - 1:00
Drill	1:00 - 3:30
Debrief and Award Certificates -Students Dismissed-	3:30 - 4:00
Drill Cleanup (Drill Staff Only)	4:00 - 5:00
Notes	
<b>-Depending on time, 5-10 minute breaks will be provided hourly on Days 1-3.</b>	
<b>-Students must provide their own lunch.</b>	
<b>-Drill times vary based on specific drill needs of the program. Above times are based on our most common drill format.</b>	

## Equipment & Training Aids

The Basic CERT Course requires the use of equipment and training aids to properly complete the exercises in each module. Below is a detailed list of the equipment required for the exercises in each module. NOTE: The exercises are essentially the same for both Basic and Enhanced Format classes.

TSI can bring all the equipment and supplies necessary to conduct the Basic CERT course if a program does not have access to them (NOTE: Courses where TSI provides all equipment and supplies are more costly due to the extra expense and logistics). However, it is highly recommended that programs provide their own training equipment and supplies so that students train on the actual equipment that the program will be using. This is especially true for programs that plan on conducting their own Basic CERT courses in the future.

**NOTE:** If the class is being sponsored by a program that requires our instructors to fly, and the program is not providing the course materials, equipment, or supplies; then the program must cover cost to ship them.

Unit	Required Materials
Unit 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Student workbooks (print or digital)*</li> <li>-Heavy duty construction paper and pens to make "table tent" nametags.*</li> <li>-Printer type paper and tape for team-building exercise (Exercise is optional)*</li> <li>-Basic CERT gear kit (1 per student)+</li> </ul>
Unit 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Gas main trainer (or equivalent utility trainer) for students to practice shutting off utilities.+</li> <li>-Live fire extinguishers (1 for every 2 students)+</li> <li>-Fire pan (Propane or similar)+</li> <li>-Way to ignite fire pan (Road flare duct-taped to a stick works well and allows opportunity to train students how to light a road flare)+</li> </ul>

Unit 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Nitrile gloves (variety of sizes)+</li> <li>-Shave cream (For glove removal exercise)+</li> <li>-CPR dummy or manikin to demonstrate opening airway (optional)+</li> <li>-Tourniquet trainers (For optional bleeding control exercise – Check program guidelines to ensure tourniquets are authorized for your program)+</li> <li>-Triage cards/tags and victim cards for triage exercise (optional)+</li> </ul>
Unit 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Assorted first aid supplies for bandaging and splinting exercise (Suggested: Feminine hygiene pads, triangle bandages (or handkerchiefs), gauze pads (assorted sizes), ace wrap, cardboard boxes (for splinting), duct tape (for splinting), boxes of Saran Wrap (for splinting), athletic tape, etc.)+</li> </ul>
Unit 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-2 to 3 2x4 inch or 4x4 inch boards, 8 feet in length (used as levers for cribbing)+</li> <li>-10+ 2x4 inch and 4x4 inch boards, cut 1 or 2 feet in length (used for building cribs in cribbing exercise. Commercial cribbing sets also available)+</li> <li>-Manikin, training dummy, or equivalent (victim for cribbing, and carrying exercises)+</li> <li>-Triage cards/tags and victim cards for search and rescue exercise (optional)*</li> <li>-Portable stretcher, litter, or equivalent (can be made out of sticks and a blanket if purpose-built option isn't available)+</li> </ul>
Unit 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Print outs of ICS forms from CERT ICS Forms packet. (Must be enough forms printed for each ICS role to do their job in the scene size-up exercise)+</li> <li>-Tabletop models (optional-can be used in place of physical location for scene size-up exercise)+</li> </ul>
Unit 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-No specific items needed for this unit.</li> </ul>
Unit 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-No specific items needed for this unit.</li> </ul>
Unit 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Printouts of student exams (optional-program specific)*</li> </ul>

<p>Final Drill (Support equipment for Drill primarily supplied by host group or agency)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Physical location to conduct drill</li> <li>-Briefing area (Should be separate but nearby to the drill site, this is where people arrive before the drill begins, and where the debrief occurs and certificates are awarded after the conclusion of the drill)</li> <li>-Moulage/Victim staging area (If possible, victims and survivors should be staged in a separate area from the CERT students before the drill to keep the drill more realistic and to avoid confusion during briefing)</li> <li>-Rubble, debris, and hazards to litter the drill site (Type and quantity dependent on scenario)</li> <li>-Personnel to act as victims and survivors (These people should be brought in for the drill if possible. They will be placed throughout the drill area in a realistic manner for the CERT's to interact with. They should all be given symptoms or injuries consistent with CERT training and the parameters of the drill scenario. If possible, moulage can be used to make the injuries to the victims and survivors more realistic)</li> <li>-Course Completion Certificates for each students (awarded after the debrief to each student that successfully completed the Basic CERT training)*</li> <li>-Skill specific equipment (For the incorporation of specific skills into the overall drill exercise) Including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fire extinguishers (1 for every 2 students) and a fire pan to practice putting out fires+</li> <li>2. Stretchers for transporting victims from the incident site to medical treatment area+</li> <li>3. Cribbing materials and trapped victims (NOTE: DO NOT USE LIVE VICTIMS FOR CRIBBING EXERCISES)+</li> <li>4. Triage Tarps (or equivalent) for medical treatment site+</li> <li>5. Medical treatment materials for medical treatment site (same as what is required for bandaging and splinting exercise in Unit 4, but in greater quantity)+</li> <li>6. ICS forms to implement the ICS system in the drill (optional-program specific)+</li> <li>7. Triage cards/tags and victim cards for managing victims and survivors*</li> <li>8. Any other specific equipment related skills that the CERT program would like to incorporate into the final disaster drill.</li> </ul> </li> <li>----Additional Optional Items----</li> <li>-ICS Ops Plan for the drill (Helpful for both running the drill and keeping things organized, as well as familiarization with the ICS structure)</li> <li>-Drill support personnel (Usually trainers or senior people within the CERT program whose job it is to help setup, manage, and cleanup the drill for the CERT students)</li> <li>-Refreshments (Coffee, drinks, and/or snacks provided in the briefing area for participants)</li> </ul>
<p><b>*Supplied as part of Instructor Only and Complete Packages</b>  <b>+Supplied as part of Complete Package ONLY</b></p>	

## Class Sizes

The optimal class arrangement is 20 students to ensure that students adequately learn the material. For larger groups, instructors can be added at an additional cost, or multiple classes can be done. We also require a minimum of 10 students per class because any less makes the exercises difficult and less effective.  
PLEASE NOTE: We do not provide lunch for students taking the class.

## Class Cost

Please contact us or visit our website for information on class cost.

**For more information, or to request a class, please contact us**

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