Office of Emergency Services
Volunteer Duties

ECS (Emergency Communications Service) Volunteer Duties

The Emergency Communications Service (ECS) is the front-line communications, technical and logistical support arm for the San Bernardino County Office of Emergency Services (OES). ECS is tasked with the support and maintenance of critical incident communications in times of emergency.

As part of the technical support mission of ECS, specially trained members of ECS also provide the County and other served agencies with incident weather support. These members undergo additional training and certification to be able to provide information from the National Weather Service, and other sources, to include routine weather briefings, weather watches or warnings, weather updates and forecasts, to deployed units in the field.

ECS Personnel are non-paid professional members of San Bernardino County OES who are specialists in communications that serve their community and who happen to hold and use FCC Amateur Radio license privileges and equipment to augment existing emergency communications systems.

ECS members come from nearly every profession – teachers, retired police officers, fighters, structural engineers, retired military personnel as well as a retired epidemiologist. ECS personnel take their work seriously and work closely with OES and other public safety personnel.

ECS is divided into four geographic divisions throughout the County, Valley, Mountain, North Desert, South Desert, within these divisions, we have multiple units and affiliated cities. This structure allows our personnel to concentrate on their involvement within their local communities but also remain available to support operations throughout the county in times of major disasters. ECS also serves multiple affiliated cities throughout the Operational Area.

ECS personnel average more than 8,400 hours per year in support of County OES and numerous other served agencies within the county as well as state and federal agencies.

Purpose
The Emergency Communications Service provides professional service to government and non-governmental organizations requesting assistance in designing, developing and implementing their disaster communication systems.

Mission
The mission of the Emergency Communications Service (ECS) is to provide San Bernardino County OES a professional, front-line communications, technical and logistical support unit unparalleled in California. San Bernardino County ECS consists of highly trained communication and technical

specialists covering multiple disciplines from Telephone Systems to Information Technology and from Microwave to Radio Communications and other supporting disciplines. The Emergency Communications Service's primary mission is disaster communication services. This provides a unique perspective in developing and maintaining interoperability and redundancy to maintain a common operating picture during disasters.

Objectives

The Emergency Communications Service provides professional service to government and non-governmental organizations requesting assistance in designing, developing and implementing their disaster communication systems. The objective of each ECS unit is to assist San Bernardino County OES meeting its missions and goals during its normal course of operation as well as in times of disaster and emergencies. All ECS units shall encourage a close, personal relationship and spirit San Bernardino County of cooperation among unit members and the regularly employed County staff. Every unit shall strive for complete professionalism of its members through continual training.

Disaster Response and Emergency Services

- Provide emergency communications support during disasters and emergencies.
- Assist in setting up and operating communication equipment.
- Monitor communication channels and relay critical information to relevant parties.
- Maintain communication links between various emergency response teams.

Training and Preparedness

- Attend and complete required training sessions, including IS-100, IS-700, IS-800, and SEMS Introduction. These courses are a requirement before being considered to be an Volunteer.
- Stay updated on the latest communication technologies and emergency response protocols.
- Assist in training new volunteers in emergency communication procedures.
- Incident Reporting:
- Document and report any communication failures or issues encountered during volunteer activities.
- Submit detailed incident reports for any unusual events or policy violations.

Vehicle Use

- If required and as assigned by the Director of Emergency Management or their designee, complete the necessary steps to operate County or private vehicles for emergency communication duties.
- Ensure all vehicle-related activities comply with County policies and safety protocols.

Professional Conduct

- Adhere to the Code of Conduct and County policies regarding volunteer behavior and ethics.
- Maintain confidentiality and professionalism in all volunteer activities.

Routine and Administrative Support:

- Participate in regular drills and training sessions to maintain readiness.
- Support community outreach and education on emergency communication protocols.
- Assist with administrative tasks related to emergency communications planning and logistics.
- Conduct routine checks and maintenance of communication equipment.

CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) Volunteer Duties

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is a volunteer opportunity that is overseen by the San Bernardino County Office of Emergency Services (OES). Each CERT team has an assigned Team Coordinator that assists in program oversight, providing training opportunities and ensuring integration into the training and preparedness of the community.

CERT educates volunteers about disaster preparedness for the hazards that may impact their area and trains volunteers in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. CERT offers a consistent, nationwide approach to volunteer training and organization that professional responders can rely on during disaster situations, allowing them to focus on more complex tasks. CERT volunteers also support the emergency management mission of whole community preparedness, public outreach, and preparation before, during, and after a disaster.

CERT Membership Requirements
- Must be 18 years of age or older
- Must possess a CA Class C Driver's License
- Completion of OES Volunteer Application
- Successful completion of a Department of Justice/Federal Bureau of Investigation (DOJ/FBI) Background Check
- Be registered as a State of CA Volunteer Disaster Service Worker (DSW)

CERT Required Trainings
- Completion of FEMA CERT Basic Training
- FEMA IS-100
- FEMA IS-700
- FEMA IS-800
- California SEMS or Introduction to Emergency Management

Disaster Response and Emergency Services
- Assist in disaster response efforts, including search and rescue operations, first aid, and disaster assessment.
- Support incident command operations by providing manpower and logistical assistance.
- Help support emergency shelters and distribution centers for essential supplies.

Community Preparedness
- Conduct community outreach programs to educate the public on disaster preparedness and response.
- Organize and participate in community drills and exercises to enhance readiness.
- Provide training to community members on basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, and medical operations.

Routine and Administrative Support

- Support OES in organizing community preparedness events and activities.
- Assist with administrative tasks, including record-keeping and documentation of volunteer hours.
- Help with inventory management and maintenance of CERT equipment and supplies.

Training and Development

- Complete required training sessions, including IS-100, IS-700, IS-800, and SEMS Introduction.
- Participate in ongoing training to stay current with disaster response techniques and protocols.
- Assist in training new CERT volunteers.

Incident Reporting

- Document and report any incidents, injuries, or policy violations during volunteer activities.
- Provide detailed accounts of noteworthy events or challenges encountered during disaster response.

Vehicle Use

- If necessary and as assigned by the Director of Emergency Management or their designee, complete the requirements for operating County or private vehicles for CERT duties.
- Follow all vehicle-related policies and ensure safety during operations.

Professional Conduct

- Follow the Code of Conduct and County policies regarding volunteer behavior and ethics.
- Maintain a positive and professional demeanor in all interactions with the public, fellow volunteers, and County staff.
- Protect the confidentiality of sensitive information encountered during volunteer service.