

Illinois Citizen Corps Council Frequently Asked Questions

CITIZEN CORPS APPLICATION PROCESS:

How do I start a Citizen Corps Council?

The National Office of Citizen Corps, located within the Federal Emergency Management Agency, oversees the Citizen Corps program. Its [website](#) has a link to register your Citizen Corps Council. Please note, updates are in progress, and a new FEMA Citizen Corps registration site will be coming soon. Required information includes contact information for the sponsoring jurisdiction's chief elected official and the CEO's choice for Citizen Corps point of contact. Once this information has been submitted through the website, it goes to the State of Illinois' Citizen Corps Program Manager, who will make contact with the registered Point of Contact regarding further registration details.

What are Illinois' specific rules regarding registering a Citizen Corps Council?

In an effort to provide equitable support and information to new councils, the Illinois Citizen Corps Council has developed minimum standards for approval of local councils within Illinois. These standards are based on federal guidance as well as guidance that a group of local Citizen Corps councils developed to further strengthen the program.

Within six months of a jurisdiction's approval on the website, that council must submit a number of items to the Illinois Citizen Corps Council, represented by the Citizen Corps Program Manager. Documents must include the Initial Council Application, a council mission statement, letter of support for the program signed by the CEO, ordinance or resolution supporting the program, and a roster of Citizen Corps Council members with very specific membership discipline representation. All of this information can be located within the Initial Council application portion of the <http://www.illinois.gov/iema/LocalEMA/CitizenCorps/Pages/default.aspx> website.

If this information is not submitted within six months, then the council will be considered on inactive status and not eligible for program support.

What are the status levels of councils in the Illinois?

An Active Citizen Corps Council is one that has met the above requirements to fully register with the Illinois Citizen Corps Council. To maintain active status, each council must submit the annual update to the council's information listed on citizencorps.gov.

A council will be considered inactive if this annual update is not completed. Illinois will remove the council and its associated programs from the national website.

REPRESENTATIVES/MEMBERSHIP:

We have a small program. If we don't have committees in all of our Partner Programs, do we have to start Partner Program Committees as shown on the Semi-Annual Programmatic Report?

No, there are no requirements for local councils to have any Partner Programs in place. However, some programs already have Partner Program leadership committees in place, and this is a method for them to report on those groups as well as their council.

What qualifies someone to be a representative on the local Citizen Corps Council (fire, law, etc.)?

The intent is to have current, professional (paid or volunteer) representation from each of the disciplines required on a council. Additionally, the intent is to involve a wide range of disciplines in order to broaden the scope of council within the community. Qualified individuals will be identified to serve as members of the local Citizen Corps Council. The individual with primary responsibility for a discipline within the

jurisdiction should determine whether the individual appointed satisfies the requirement. In other words, the fire or police chief (or sheriff), appointed EMA coordinator, etc. will determine the representative for their respective disciplines.

Can there be a partner program like CERT in a local jurisdiction without a Citizen Corps Council?

The answer is no. The spirit of the Citizen Corps program is to have an advisory body affiliated with a local unit of government to oversee all homeland security volunteerism initiatives like CERT, VIPS, Fire Corps, MRC, etc. While there is a place online to separately register individual Citizen Corps programs like CERT, those registrations will not be approved unless there is a Citizen Corps Council approved and registered first.

REPORTING:

Do I need to have a letter of support, resolution and ordinance—or will just one of them suffice?

You must have a letter of support from the Chief Elected Official with the Point of Contact and Council membership identified. In addition to the letter of support, you must also have either a resolution OR ordinance supporting the council.

What standards will be utilized to determine whether a council is effective?

A council will be placed on probationary status due to a lack of reporting. The Illinois Citizen Corps Council will determine status of all programs based on reporting and financial responsibility.

If a council is struggling but working hard to start or continue activity in the programs, will they be judged as inactive by the committee?

No. Councils will be placed on inactive status only if there is a lack of reporting.

CITIZEN CORPS AND NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (NIMS):

What are the NIMS requirements for Citizen Corps Programs?

NIMS does not specify requirements for programs. You must work with your local staff responsible for compliance.