

State of Illinois
Illinois Citizen Corps Council
Citizen Corps Application Information

Thank you for your interest in the Illinois Citizen Corps. The mission of the state Council is to harness the power of every individual through education, training, and volunteer service to make communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to the threats of terrorism, crime, public health issues, and disasters of all kinds.

In an effort to provide equitable support and information to new Councils, the State Citizen Council has developed minimum standards for approval of local councils within the State of Illinois. By following these guidelines, you will be among the active Councils who are able to apply for funding, receive training opportunities, develop networking relationships with similar programs, access best practices and lessons learned, among other benefits. These benefits are available only to active Councils within the State of Illinois.

A committee of local council coordinators has developed the state application process. All applications and annual reports will be approved by a committee of your peers in the Illinois Citizen Corps Council/ITTF Volunteer & Donations Committee. Should the state Citizen Corps Council determine that your application is incomplete, you will be notified of the items necessary to reach approval for the formation of the local council.

Committee membership is subject to change and if you are interested in membership on the State of Illinois Citizen Corps Council please make contact via the citizen.corps@illinois.gov email.

Per the National Citizen Corps Guidelines, the primary objectives of local Councils are to:

- ✓ **Match the needs of first responders** with the skills and abilities of volunteers to make their families, their homes, and their communities safer from the threats of terrorism, crime, and disasters.
- ✓ **Educate the public on safety**, help citizens take an active role in protecting themselves from harm, and teach citizens what to do in the event of a crisis.
- ✓ **Spearhead efforts** to offer citizens new and existing volunteer opportunities, educational information, and training courses to address crime, terrorism, and natural disaster risks.
- ✓ **Promote all Citizen Corps programs** and activities across the community.
- ✓ **Capture innovative practices** and report accomplishments that can be replicated in other communities nationwide.
- ✓ **Survey the community** to assess increased awareness and Citizen Corps participation.

Where these resources are available, a local Citizen Corps should make every attempt to involve each group in the Council. Letters of invitation should be stored by the local Council to show good faith effort.

Creating a new organization to start Citizen Corps is not required. If your community already has a strong team that brings together all sectors of your community, including first responders and volunteer groups, you may want to ask this group to take on the responsibility of promoting Citizen Corps and to acknowledge this group as affiliated with Citizen Corps. You are strongly encouraged to leverage existing resources and build on current successful programs whenever possible.

For the purposes of these guiding documents, a Council is the oversight or advisory group that supports the activities of the volunteer group and possibly holds the responsibility for ensuring that reporting requirements are met. A Program consists of the activities of the Council and/or a

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CERT, MRC, VIPS, Fire Corps, or USAonWatch/Neighborhood Watch program and any other associated activities.

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Requirements for application:

Immediate:

- ✓ Program must be affiliated with a local taxing jurisdiction (municipal, township, county)
- ✓ Jurisdiction must be National Incident Management System (NIMS) Compliant if it wishes to be eligible for grant funds (see www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/ for more information on how to become complaint)
- ✓ Program will be awarded to the first applicant per jurisdiction with Chief Elected Official approval.
- ✓ Program must apply for recognition at www.citizencorps.gov

Within 6 months of approval of online application at www.citizencorps.gov:

- ✓ Program must submit a mission statement
- ✓ Program must submit a letter of support signed by the Chief Elected Official, jurisdiction resolution or jurisdiction ordinance supporting the Citizen Corps Council and programs
- ✓ Program must submit a roster of members for an advisory Council of no less than 7 persons in place (recommended 7 – 13, odd # only).
- ✓ Council membership MUST include at least one (1) member from seven (7) of the ten (10) categories listed below. An individual person may fill a role for more than one discipline/representative group providing that they hold responsibility within the jurisdiction for a specific role within each of those representative disciplines/organizations. These categories ensure that there is a representative mix on the Council and also intends to ensure that there is an appropriate mix of government and non-governmental organizations:
 - emergency management,
 - homeland security,
 - law enforcement,
 - fire service,
 - medical services/public health,
 - elected officials,
 - the private sector (especially privately owned critical infrastructure),
 - private non-profits,
 - non-governmental organizations (including faith-based and community-based organizations),
 - advocacy groups for special needs populations.
- ✓ Council membership SHOULD also include the following representatives unless a specific program does not exist within the jurisdiction:
 - CERT Program coordinator
 - Fire Corps Program coordinator
 - Medical Reserve Corps coordinator
 - USAonWatch/Neighborhood Watch Program Coordinator
 - Volunteers In Police Service coordinator
 - Affiliate Program representatives (see the www.citizencorps.gov website for a current and complete listing).

Documents which are required for initial application include (within 6 months of on-line application):

- ✓ CEO letter of support with Point of Contact and the list of Council members including discipline/agency represented,
- ✓ Illinois Citizen Corps Council Application (attached),
- ✓ Mission Statement for Council and where they exist, mission statements for each Program area,

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- ✓ Constitution, policies, guidance documents (minimally, CEO letter of support, jurisdictional resolution or ordinance supporting the Citizen Corps Council),
- ✓ Upcoming meeting schedule for a 12 month period,
- ✓ Any notes from Council planning meetings held prior to approval, if any
- ✓ Roster of all current local Council members (advisory council only – not full membership roster).

The initial on-line application may be submitted without supporting documents; however, the State of Illinois application and supporting documentation must be submitted no later than 6 months of approval of online application to the Illinois Citizen Corps Council/Volunteer & Donations Committee Chairperson at citizen.corps@illinois.gov or 2200 S Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois 62703.

Applications which are not submitted in a complete form within six (6) months of the initial application will be discarded. A local group wishing to apply for membership after the six (6) month period will need to start the application process from the beginning.

Ongoing requirements:

- ✓ Program must complete Semi-Annual Programmatic Reports on July 15 for the period of January-June 30 and by January 15 for the period of July-December 31 due January 15 and must include the following information:
 - Statistics for component organizations
 - Affiliate programs with Citizen Corps Council
 - Partner programs with Citizen Corps Council
 - Public education and outreach
 - Events sponsored
 - Training (examples)
 - People trained
 - Exercises
 - Status of spending
 - Best practices / outstanding story

It is highly encouraged that once Councils are fully approved that the jurisdiction continue to further develop its Council per the most current Homeland Security Grant Program Guidance and Application Kit: "Citizen preparedness and participation must be coordinated by an integrated body of government and non-governmental representatives. States and local government recipients and sub-grantees of HSGP funds, including Urban Areas, must have such a body to serve as their Citizen Corps Council with membership that includes, but is not limited to: representatives from emergency management, homeland security, law enforcement, fire service, medical services/public health, elected officials, the private sector (especially privately owned critical infrastructure), private non-profits, non-governmental organizations (including faith-based and community-based organizations), and advocacy groups for special needs populations. Representatives from existing Citizen Corps programs, to include Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS), Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Neighborhood Watch/USAonWatch, Fire Corps, and Affiliates should also be included on these Citizen Corps Councils. Furthermore, Citizen Corps Councils should include a representative from the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) where one exists.

Ongoing Status (active vs. inactive status):

Semi-Annual Programmatic Reports are due at the same time as the Biannual Strategy Implementation Report (BSIR) grant reports. If either report is not filed when required, a Council

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will be placed on Probationary Status. Submittal of completed reports will place the Council back onto Active Status.

A local Council may be placed on Probationary Status due to a lack of activity/community outreach as shown in reports submitted to the State Council. A local Council will be placed on Probationary Status due to a lack of utilization of grant funding or the return of grant funding at the end of any grant year.

Council who are on Probationary Status should not expect payment of current grant associated bills and/or approval of funding requests for future grant years. A Council who has moved to Probationary Status has essentially broken the grant agreement and the State Council will not be responsible for payment of associated purchases until reporting requirements are up to date.

If either report is not filed within a year from the original due date, the Council will be removed from all Council rosters including the www.citizencorps.gov website. This is considered Inactive Status. A local Council must then re-apply for recognition as a Council from the beginning of the process.

The state Citizen Corps Council will send a notice of status to the Chief Elected Official (CEO) and Point Of Contact (POC) for the local jurisdiction at the 9 month time frame alerting the jurisdiction that they are pending removal from the national database (probationary status is moving to inactive status).

Non-funded programs (programs still within the initial application process) will not be eligible for funding in the coming grant year unless a program report is filed on time for the appropriate deadline period.

Assignment of local council status is on a first come, first served basis to the jurisdiction who applies for a council status. In other words, if a township applies for status and the community it serves has a Council in active standing with the state, the township application will be denied and it will be expected that both entities will work together through the established Council. (Existing Councils will be grand-fathered regarding multiple units in a single jurisdiction.)