

Program Guide: Online Basic CERT Course Delivery

For CERT Program Leaders and Instructors

This online Basic CERT course is a comprehensive lecture portion of all 9 units of the national standardized curriculum, and is hoped to prepare the student as well as possible for the practical hands-on portion which will be planned and delivered by the local registered CERT program.

Understand that not everyone can take a learning course online, whether for lack of technological infrastructure, or for physical or mental limitations. For this reason it may be necessary to hold a traditional in-person Basic CERT Course every once in a while. However, for those who are comfortable with online courses, this tool can help provide learning through the standardized curriculum at the convenience and pace of the individual. This strategy may also help reduce common CERT course delivery barriers such as time commitment for instructors and students. The use of this strategy may also make this training available to those commonly unable to take the traditional course, such as mothers, youth, or individuals at the work place. The following details will help in implementing this course delivery strategy.

Course delivery strategies: There are several options for delivering the Basic CERT Course. The traditional method, online with an in-person practical time, or hybrid.

- **Traditional:** The CERT Course is delivered as an in-person class completing all 9 units and is based off the nationally recognized Basic CERT Instructor Guide and Participant Manual. Adequate time has to be given in order to fully complete all 9 units. This typically takes 24 hrs of classroom contact time and is typically split up into 3hrs an evening once a week over the span of 8 weeks.
- **Online with in-person practical:** Here students sign up at sign up at <https://utah.instructure.com/register>, use the join code "RR3BX6", clicks on "I'm a Student", and takes the lecture portion of the course online (about 9 hours), learning at their own pace and convenience. Once completed the student will be prompted to print and submit a certificate of online portion completion to their local registered CERT program. The registered CERT program will plan a practical day (about 16 hours) where they will conduct, and the student will pass off, all the hands on skills in the course, learn about local plans, and participate in a disaster simulation. The local program determines the parameters for this practical portion. The in-person practical portion may be completed in 16 hours or two 8 hour days but must be adequate to complete each required practical in order for a certificate of full course completion to be given. See [Instructor Guidance - CERT Skills Checklist](#) for comprehensive list of practical's needing to be passed off. The students use the [Participant CERT Skills Checklist](#) to pass off each skill. Another option for practical portion delivery is while the student takes the online unit, the program schedules 2 hours once a week for that student to come in and pass off that units associated hands on practical portion. This approach may help the students stay on task to completing the online course.
- **Hybrid:** This includes a way to help complete make ups, or a way to supplement an instructor in an in-person course.
 - **Make up's:** For those who take the traditional in-person Basic CERT Course but miss a unit, you can direct that individual to make up said unit through the online CERT training, print off and submit proof of unit completion and then work with an instructor to pass off the associated skills in that unit. Proof of unit completion would be a printed screen shot of the unit quiz results showing a passing score of a minimum of 70%.
 - And/or the instructor could use the online curriculum for a selected unit in place of themselves acting as the presenter. In this case the presenter simply acts as a facilitator in a group setting, simply running the online course in front of the group and then conducts the associated skills with the students in the classroom.

Public promotion: It's advised to actively promote this course through a variety of ways. The most effective way will be through public gatherings where you can conduct a presentation on what CERT is and why it's valuable for the individual and community, and provide handouts that direct individuals interested how to take the course and connect with the local program for the practical portion. You can also promote through your community news, webpages, and social media. See [sample flyer](#) for public promotion. An editable version of the flyer is provided in the shared folder. Also use [sample videos/PSA's](#) for introducing CERT in public gatherings. Also see sample pictures ([JPG](#) or [PNG](#)) for promotion use on websites or social media and be sure to link the picture to the place individuals can go to take the course.

CERT Practical Portion: This happens after the online course lecture portion, and may happen when the student provides proof of online completion. Proof of online completion is provided as an electronic printable document at the end of the online course. Understand that it may be necessary for your local program to give direction to your community members on when and where the practical portions will be delivered and how to submit their certificate of online completion. The in-person CERT practical portion may be completed in 16 hours / two 8 hour days, or as a series of 2 hour segments (typically 2 hours, once a week) in conjunction with each unit as planned and advertised by the local registered CERT Program. A sample agenda may look as follows:

- Provide each student with their own copy of the Basic CERT Course Participant Manual. The online course references to the electronic manual throughout the course, however the student may not have received a physical copy until now. The physical copy can act as a reference throughout the practical's and also from then on throughout the individuals' life.
- Introduce them to their Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) if you are providing it. Direct community members to bring their own PPE if your program is not providing it.
- Conduct an ice breaker activity to encourage interaction among the students.
- Assign students into groups with an instructor. It is best to keep the instructor to student ratio to no more than 6 students per every one instructor, and the students paired in groups of 2 or 3. This way students can be adequately observed and coached to ensure the skill the student performed was done correctly, and then the instructor can with good conscience sign off the skill that student performed.
- Conduct and sign off skills from each unit in the Basic CERT Course. There are 72 items to be signed off. (13 hrs)
 - This may require a brief review of each skill. The instructor should be prepared to describe the skill, demonstrate the skill, and then have the individual do the skill with instructor coaching. This is in line with CERT Train-The-Trainer guidelines. See [Instructor Guide – CERT Skills Checklist](#)
 - Each skill will need to be signed off by an instructor. See [Participant CERT Skills Checklist](#).
- Discuss any specific local hazards and official plans for CERT use in your area, including your local CERT policies and protocols. Referencing to the local Emergency Operation Plan and showing how CERT fits in the plan may be beneficial.
- Discuss details on any opportunities for individuals to get further involved in the CERT Program or other programs, if applicable. Also include any additional training opportunities for CERT members, ie. any FEMA CERT add-on modules, hazard specific training, Red Cross, or other local, state, or federal provided courses.
- Conducting the mock disaster (3 hrs). See [Instructor Guide – CERT Skills Checklist](#) for disaster sim suggested layout.
 - The test is satisfactorily completed through the online course; the review is completed with the practical's.
 - Once the individual has passed off each skill, then they should participate in a mock disaster as planned and advertised by the local registered CERT Program. This may happen at the end of the second day.

Course Completion Certificate: Once all units and skills are satisfactorily completed and signed off by an Instructor, and once the individual has participated in a mock disaster where they practice the skills they have learned, then an official certificate of course completion will be issued by the official registered CERT Program. The local CERT Program will maintain all records at the local level. See [sample certificate](#) your program is welcome use, and be sure to include your sponsoring agencies logos.

After Course Completion: Team building and retaining what's been learned doesn't happen on a one time basis. It is encouraged to conduct refreshers and team building activities on a regular basis. It is up to the local registered CERT program to determine what that entails. It is also up to the individual on how involved they want to be. Some may take the course for their own benefit, others may take the course and show interest in getting involved. Both options are great. If further interest is communicated, it's important for the program to have a way for volunteers to get involved and a role to fill. This is up to the local CERT Program and sponsoring agency to determine what volunteer roles are needed. The CERT Program Managers Course will help program leaders develop a sustainable program plan so they can utilize volunteers in the best ways possible.

Link to all documents available for download and use:

<https://goo.gl/xns9V9>

