

**What is DRT?**

Disaster Response Team, or DRT, is an off-shoot of the CERT program. Atlantic County recognized that not all municipalities are able to maintain a CERT program. DRT is a volunteer program, which participates in training volunteers in areas such as: Personal Preparedness, Shelter Operations, Feeding Operations, Incident Management, Animal Response, Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Operations and Domestic Preparedness. These training modules will help volunteers know how to respond when a disaster occurs or when the Atlantic County Office of Emergency Management activates during a crisis. For more information, visit: [www.readyatlantic.org/get/drt.asp](http://www.readyatlantic.org/get/drt.asp)

**What is CERT?**

Community Emergency Response Teams, or CERT, is a concept developed in 1985 by the Los Angeles Fire Department. They recognized that citizens would very likely be on their own during the early stages of a catastrophic disaster. They decided that some basic training in disaster survival and rescue skills would improve the ability of citizens to survive until emergency personnel could arrive. CERT training consists of 20 hours of instruction over an eight-week period. Certain municipalities in Atlantic County have their own CERT team and training. To become a CERT member, you must be at least 18 years of age and possess a valid driver's license. For more information, visit: <http://www.state.nj.us/njoem/cert/index.shtml>

**What is MRC?**

The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Program, a volunteer program, coordinates the skills of practicing and retired physicians, nurses and other health professionals as well as other citizens interested in health issues, who are eager to volunteer to address their community's ongoing public health needs and to help their community during large-scale emergency situations. The MRC unit, in coordination with ACOEM, will make decisions, with local officials, on when the community Medical Reserve Corps is activated during a local emergency. For more information, visit: [www.readyatlantic.org/get/mrc.asp](http://www.readyatlantic.org/get/mrc.asp)

**What is CART?**

Atlantic County Animal Response Team, or CART, is an off-shoot of the CERT program. The volunteers of CART will temporarily shelter animals where general or medical needs shelters will not accept animals. To contact CART, please email: [animailresponse@readyatlantic.org](mailto:animailresponse@readyatlantic.org) For more information on pet friendly hotels in Atlantic County, visit: [www.readyatlantic.org/pdf/petfriendly.pdf](http://www.readyatlantic.org/pdf/petfriendly.pdf)

**What is ESRT?**

Emotional Support Response Team (ESRT). ESRT members respond and deploy to disaster areas, to work in shelters side by side with shelter personnel and other emergency response workers, to assist in identifying, assessing and meeting the essential needs of people with access and functional needs, in shelters to maintain their health, safety and independence during disasters.

**What is DRCC?**

Disaster Response Crisis Counselor (DRCC). New Jersey is one of the first states to certify its behavioral health responders in preparation for response to disasters and traumatic events. The development of a cadre of paraprofessionals and professionals enhances the capability of activating a timely and effective behavioral health response. A Disaster Response Crisis Counselor (DRCC) is a volunteer who becomes part of an Emergency Response Network and responds to the needs of communities in the event that a disaster strikes. The DRCC's are trained in disaster response, disaster behavioral health and crisis counseling, among other topics and they collaborate with the various response partners who participate in the statewide emergency response network. The DRCC does not need to have a clinical background as the crisis counseling program does not provide traditional mental health services. The training will provide the technical support and knowledge needed to become a DRCC emphasizing psychological first aid and information and referral services. For more information, please visit: [www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhas/home/disaster/credentialing/Become\\_a\\_DRCC.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhas/home/disaster/credentialing/Become_a_DRCC.pdf)

**How do they all connect?**

When an emergency or disaster strikes, officials will determine which type of response is needed. Many times, all volunteer teams work together and are asked to assist.

**Can I be on more than one team?**

Yes, you can be on more than one team. We have several volunteers who participate in many of our programs.

**Is there one handout here that explains all this?**

Although there is not one handout that explains all of the Atlantic County Office of Emergency Management programs, much information and explanation can be obtained by visiting the websites: [www.atlantic-county.org/oepe](http://www.atlantic-county.org/oepe) and [www.readyatlantic.org](http://www.readyatlantic.org)

**What does it mean that I will be called in times of disaster?**

Depending on your training and comfort level of volunteering, the Atlantic County Office of Emergency Management (ACOEM), in times of disaster, may reach out to you for assistance in a shelter, point of distribution center or an assignment where needed. It is important to note, no volunteer self deploys, the ACOEM office will assign volunteers to specific locations.

**Do you have a youth team?**

At this time, the Atlantic County Office of Emergency Management does not have a youth team.

**What do I have to do to volunteer?**

There are many ways to volunteer. You can contact your municipal Office of Emergency Management to inquire about their CERT program. To become a volunteer for the Atlantic County DRT, there are a number of "core" courses required. For more information, email [volunteer@readyatlantic.org](mailto:volunteer@readyatlantic.org) or visit: [www.readyatlantic.org/get/drt.asp](http://www.readyatlantic.org/get/drt.asp)

**What will I be asked to do?**

Depending on your training and comfort level of volunteering, the Atlantic County Office of Emergency Management (ACOEM), in times of disaster, may reach out to you for assistance in a shelter, point of distribution center or an assignment where needed. It is important to note, no volunteer self deploys, the ACOEM office will assign volunteers to specific locations.

**How many hours will I be there?**

A general operational period is twelve (12) hours.

**Will I get paid to help my community?**

As a general rule, volunteers are not awarded monetary compensation. However, you may want to check with your employer or educational institution on any programs they may have in this regard.

**I was trained by the Red Cross can I help you?**

We welcome everyone who can help. Red Cross training is very helpful, however, be sure to keep checking [www.atlantic-county.org/oep/](http://www.atlantic-county.org/oep/) for training classes.

**Who do I contact when I have questions?**

You can contact the office by visiting: [www.atlantic-county.org/oep/](http://www.atlantic-county.org/oep/) Click on the Contact and Address Information tab and fill out the contact form. Or, you can email: [volunteer@readyatlantic.org](mailto:volunteer@readyatlantic.org) Your inquiry will be answered as soon as possible.

**When are classes?**

To view a list of current classes, visit: [www.atlantic-county.org/oep/](http://www.atlantic-county.org/oep/) view the Training Courses – OEP On-line Campus section of the page.

**How often are classes held?**

Classes are held on an as needed basis. Check the web site frequently for current information.

**I work nights. Do you have volunteer meetings during the day?**

At this time, we do not have volunteer meetings during the day.

**How will I be called to help?**

When the Office of Emergency Management determines volunteer assistance is needed, you will receive an e-mail with several options of volunteering. It is extremely important that OEM has your current, correct email address.

**I live alone and have a dog, can they come with me to the shelter when I work?**

Due to the operation and needs of the general public, no, your pet cannot accompany you at a shelter when you volunteer.

**I work with kids is there a team that I could offer my skills on?**

There is not a team dedicated specifically for children. However, in a shelter setting, we have games and movies available. Having someone organize children's activities in a shelter would be welcomed.

**Will CART pick up my animals? I have 6 dogs and only one crate.**

Through training and planning, we help you understand how to prepare for an emergency regarding your pets. No, CART will not pick up your animals.

**My son is on a breathing machine, will the shelter have that available?**

Without knowing the specifics of your son's apparatus, the answer is: No. You should be able to check with local hospitals or your son's physician regarding the equipment you would need in the time of disaster.

**Is there security at the sites we will be asked to work?**

Yes, there is a police presence at all shelter sites.