



New CERT San Diego Academy Graduates: *Info You Need to Know!*

Congratulations on your recent graduation from the City of San Diego's CERT Program Academy. You have taken the very important step towards being prepared in case of a disaster. The following is an explanation of *our program's structure, of how to become an active member, and of key requirements for becoming and remaining an active team member.*

Program Structure

CERT San Diego utilizes a Tier System. There are currently two tiers, though more may be added in future years. Active CERT SD members can self-assign to either Tier (as a new graduate, you are not considered an "Active CERT SD member" yet—see section below to learn how you can become active). For instance, if a Tier II member does not feel he or she can meet the yearly requirements, then he or she can contact the CERT office prior to December 31st stating that they wish to be assigned to Tier I for the following year.

Any Tier I or Tier II member who self-assigns to Tier I is eligible to request placement at Tier II the following year (note transitions between Tiers only happens on December 31st).

Each Tier has specific requirements.

Tier I:

- Training: Attend one Refresher per calendar year of your DSW card.
- Reporting requirements: None.
- Paperwork: 30 to 60 days before your DSW card's expiration, complete a DSW Renewal Form and submit it to the CERT program office. As a member of this tier, you are eligible to be activated during a disaster.

Tier II:

- Training: Six Continuing Educations and one Refresher per calendar year.
- Reporting requirements: Report participation in any activity to the CERT program office via email or phone call within 30 days of completion. (If a submission is not received, the team member does not receive credit.)
- Paperwork: 30 to 60 days before your DSW card's expiration, complete a DSW Renewal Form and submit it to the CERT program office. As a member of this tier, you are eligible to be activated during a disaster.

New Graduates: How to Become an Active Member After Graduation

Within the first 12 months after the date of graduation, new graduates must:

- Attend three SDFD-approved Continuing Education trainings
- Submit hours to the CERT program office at the following email address (cert@sandiego.gov) within 30 days of attendance to receive credit
- Notify CERT program office once you complete all requirements.

That's it! Now you are officially an active CERT SD Tier II member and will receive your DSW card and basic go-pack once your submissions are verified.

Key Requirements for Becoming and Remaining an Active Team Member

Each tier in our system has its own requirements, which are listed above.

- Know what tier you are in (if you are unsure, contact the CERT program office).
- Know the requirements to remain active at that tier.
- Follow the reporting requirements (30-days after attending).
- Know definition of Continuing Education and Refresher (see below).
- Know where to find the training and event registration page is on the CERT website.
- Keep a record of all your participation.

Training Descriptions

- **Continuing Education:**
 - Classes, seminars, exercises/drills that cover topics BEYOND THOSE IN THE CERT ACADEMY (remedial level classes excluded).
 - A minimum of two hours.
 - Subject matter covers information that is within CERT San Diego's identified scope of duty.
 - Continuing Education from an organization other than CERT SD needs pre-approval (see document called, "Information Needed for Non-CERT CE Approval").
 - **Please note:** Training and volunteer activities for work or other volunteer organizations cannot be used for Continuing Education credit with CERT SD.
- **Refresher:**
 - A minimum four-hour training that reviews the basic information taught during the basic academy.
 - This is NOT the same as a Continuing Education and cannot be substituted.
 - Taught by accredited CERT instructors (SDFD or other SD County Council affiliated program instructor).

- **Please note:** Training and volunteer activities for work or other volunteer organizations cannot be used for Refresher credit with CERT SD.
- **Volunteer Credit:**
 - Many times SDFD offers volunteers the opportunity to participate in community festivals, speaking engagements with other organizations, and various events associated with the San Diego Fire-Rescue firefighter groups. These are great ways to bring awareness to our communities about CERT, what we do, and how they can become a part of the fun. **Volunteer Credit is not required to qualify for or renew your DSW card**, but your time spent in the community is valuable.