

Orlando Citizen Corps Strategic Plan for Volunteer Involvement

Mission:

The Orlando Citizen Corps mission is to make communities safer, stronger and better prepared to respond to threats of terrorism, crime, public health issues and disasters of all kinds by engaging individuals in crime prevention, emergency preparedness and response through education, training and volunteer service.

Benefits to the Orlando Community:

- Supplementing professional police, fire, emergency management, public health and public safety capabilities where appropriate.
- Giving residents a greater sense of security, responsibility and personal control.
- Showcasing Orlando's efforts in crime prevention, public safety, emergency medical response, emergency preparedness and responses as part of the national Citizen Corps initiative.
- Bringing together the volunteer and first responder communities to promote the concept that everyone has a role in making their community safer, stronger and better prepared.
- Demonstrating the City of Orlando's leadership and personal commitment to the safety of our community.
- Building community pride and patriotism.
- Preparing the community for the vital role of caring for others and us in times of crisis.
- Orlando Citizen Corps Council and its activities support the cities comprehensive emergency management program in the key areas of preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation.

Citizen Corps Council:

Orlando Citizen Corps Council provides advice and leadership to the Citizen Corps initiative. This council represents leaders from a cross-section of our community. The purpose of the council is to have all decision makers at the table to manage existing volunteer resources, leverage mutually supportive endeavors to raise public awareness and to direct the overall local plans to implement Citizen Corps in the Orlando community.

Members of the Citizen Corps Council have the opportunity to serve on task teams. These working task teams meet periodically to develop and implement activities that support Orlando's Citizen Corps. Task Teams include Marketing, Recruitment and Community Events.

Marketing Task Team Mission:

Develop and recommend a campaign to create and expand public awareness of the Orlando Citizen Corps and its training opportunities. Identify partnerships and resources needed to implement the campaign.

Recruitment Task Team Mission:

Develop and recommend effective ways to recruit citizens to participate in Citizen Corps trainings.

Community Events Task Team Mission

Participate in a co-branding event with the American Red Cross, Orlando Regional Chamber of Commerce and the City of Orlando that will raise awareness to citizens about local emergency preparedness, disaster response, and crime prevention training courses and volunteer opportunities.

Identify community events that volunteers will promote Orlando Citizen Corps training courses and volunteer opportunities.

Communication Strategy:

Emergency Support Function 15 at the City of Orlando’s Emergency Operation Center will serve as the coordination point in the development of volunteer communication plans. The Citizen Corps Council is the central coordination body and will be kept informed of volunteer agencies’ communication plans.

Orlando’s Citizen Corps Council identified four centerpiece initiatives aimed at building a safer, more secure and more strongly bonded community.

Four Centerpiece Initiatives:

1. **Public Safety Volunteers Program**
2. **First Responders Support Program**
3. **Business Community Emergency Preparedness**
4. **Proud and Secure Neighborhoods**

Orlando’s Citizen Corps intends to integrate all the local volunteer, military, business, faith-based, health-care, and civic organizations with the community public safety and emergency response authorities in support of these four initiatives.

1. Public Safety Volunteers Program

This initiative is aimed at adding volunteer capacity to the stretched resources of the public safety agencies in our community.

1.1 Citizens for Neighborhood Watch

- Citizens for Neighborhood Watch (CNW) is a community involvement program, which directly involves citizens in the detection and prevention of crime. This training addresses a wide variety of crime prevention topics designed to suppress crime and reduce the fear of crime so citizens feel secure in their homes, workplaces, and neighborhoods. Citizens must complete at least four hours of training to be CNW members.

1.2 Citizen Police Academy /Senior Citizen Police Academy/ Hispanic Police Academy

- The Citizen Police Academy is similar to the professional police academy, which trains police officers. The goal of this program is to introduce citizens to police work, from how police patrol neighborhoods to tactics used in high-risk incidents. Training topics include: traffic and patrol operations, communications, drug unit, homicide, auto theft unit, robbery unit, special weapons and tactics, mounted horse patrol, K-9 unit and neighborhood patrol teams.

1.3 Citizen Observer Program

- The Citizen Observer Program (COP) is comprised of community volunteers who help the Orlando Police Department (OPD) maintain livable neighborhoods by reducing crime. Trained COP members have specially marked vehicles, which allow them to monitor neighborhoods and alert the police to hazards and unlawful behavior. Upon completion of training, volunteers donate at least 12 hours per month patrolling neighborhoods. The Citizen Police Academy is a pre-requisite for participation in this program.

1.4 Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS)

- Volunteers in Police Service draws on the time of civilian volunteers to perform a wide variety of roles, allowing law enforcement professionals to better perform their frontline duties.

1.5 Crime Line

- To increase the safety of the Central Florida community by assisting law enforcement agencies in removing undesirable individuals from the community. The crimeline purpose is to motivate citizens to provide information on felony crimes by offering financial reward and guaranteeing anonymity.

1.6 Citizen Fire Academy/Hispanic Fire Academy

- The Citizen Fire Academy educates citizens about the work and responsibilities of firefighters. This program offers a close-up look at the complexities of the Orlando Fire Department and equips citizens with life-saving information.

1.7 Keeping Involved Through Service (KITS)

- KITS draws on the time of civilian volunteers to perform a wide variety of roles, allowing the Fire Department to better perform their frontline duties.

1.8 Continuing Education

- Continuing education will be offered/ provided to all Citizen Corps volunteers to keep them up to date on current methods and practices and to keep them engaged with local homeland security efforts.

2. First Responders Support Program

This initiative is aimed at providing a well-trained cadre of emergency response volunteers, trained to manage other volunteers and fully integrate with the professional first-responder organizations in the community.

2.1 Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)/ Hispanic CERT

- CERT is a program that trains our citizens to keep themselves, their families, and neighbors safe during a disaster until professional help can arrive. Training topics include: disaster preparedness, disaster medical operations, light search and rescue, fire suppression, and pre/post storm operations. This program is lead by the Orlando Fire Department.

2.2 Senior CERT

- Senior CERT mirrors the traditional CERT program and is focused on meeting the specific needs of senior citizens.

2.3 Medical Reserve Corps

- When established, this program will: coordinate skills of medical professional volunteers, meet non-emergency, public health needs, assist emergency response teams, treat homebound patients and provide ambulatory services.

2.4 Management of Volunteers

- Large scale emergencies, where volunteer services are needed.
- Assist with identifying the needs in the community

2.5 Volunteer Support Agencies

- Partnerships with local emergency preparedness agencies/organizations including but not limited to: VOAD, Red Cross, Florida Interfaith Networking in Disaster, etc

3. Business Community Emergency Preparedness

This initiative has a three-fold objective: (a) To provide training to businesses on emergency preparedness; (b) to ensure that employees know how to care for themselves and their families in the event of an emergency; and (c) to tap the significant resource of volunteers available through the business community, to provide aid to the professional first-responders.

3.1 Business Disaster Preparedness Program

- Offers assistance to local businesses in developing a comprehensive business disaster plan. Program elements include establishing a business disaster planning team, developing a Comprehensive Emergency Management Program (CEMP), interfacing with the City of Orlando during a disaster, notifying employees, and business continuity planning.

3.2 Business Emergency Response Teams

- Team leaders complete CERT training- organizes a team at business and trains them to perform certain tasks.

4. Proud and Secure Neighborhoods

This initiative is focused on bringing about increased safety and security one neighborhood at a time.

4.1 Citizens for Neighborhood Watch

- Citizens for Neighborhood Watch (CNW) is a community involvement program, which directly involves citizens in the detection and prevention of crime. This training addresses a wide variety of crime prevention topics designed to suppress crime and reduce the fear of crime so citizens feel secure in their homes, workplaces, and neighborhoods. Citizens must complete at least four hours of training to be CNW members.

4.2 SeniorLinks

- This grass roots initiative creates a network among homeowners and neighborhood associations to support isolated senior citizens and engage seniors in emergency preparedness and crime prevention training.

4.3 Hometown Security Volunteer program

- This special group of volunteers will have completed four of the Citizen Corps training courses. They will work with neighborhoods/ senior citizens produce emergency plans, encourage special needs citizens to register with the Fire Department, and assist with Citizen Corps marketing/recruitment.

4.4 “We The People” Speakers Bureau

- Active Speakers Bureau groups composed on citizen volunteers who promote Orlando’s Citizen Corps training and volunteer opportunities.

4.5 Neighborhood Emergency Response Plans

- The NERP Program brings together individuals that have taken preparedness training and utilizes that training to collectively develop a plan suited to their neighborhood. This program is a great opportunity for neighborhoods to take a proactive step towards preparedness. This program provides our City neighborhoods with a template to develop a comprehensive emergency management plan. These neighborhood plans assist with identifying people with special needs, people with special skills (doctors, nurses, translators), neighborhood rally points or meeting place, and mechanism to share information and establish methodology of accountability after a major impact.