



Ohio Citizen Corps

The mission of Citizen Corps is to harness the power of citizens, 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 all types of disasters through:

- Preparing the public for local risks with targeted outreach
- Engaging voluntary organizations to help augment resources for public safety, preparedness and response capabilities
- Integrating the whole community and integrating nontraditional resources to ensure disaster preparedness

The Ohio Citizen Corps is part of a national network of more than 1,200 state, local and tribal Citizen Corps Councils that bring together local government, business and community leaders who work to prepare their communities for disasters and to make them more resilient.

Citizen Corps programs build on the successful efforts that are in place in many communities to prevent crime and respond to emergencies. Citizen Corps is coordinated nationally by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). In this capacity, FEMA works closely with other federal entities, state and local governments, first responders and emergency managers, the volunteer community, and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The Citizen Corps partner programs listed below give citizens the opportunity to get involved and help build capacity for first responders through the use of volunteers.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)



The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program educates people about disaster preparedness and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, and disaster medical operations. Using their training, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood, school campus, or workplace following an event, and can take a more active role in preparing their community. This program is administered by FEMA.

Fire Corps



The Fire Corps promotes the use of citizen advocates to enhance the capacity of resource-constrained fire and rescue departments at all levels: volunteer, combination and career. Citizen advocates can assist local fire departments in a range of activities including fire safety outreach, youth programs and administrative support. Fire Corps provides resources to assist fire and rescue departments in creating opportunities for citizen advocates and promote citizen participation. Fire Corps is funded through DHS and is managed and implemented through a partnership between the National Volunteer Fire Council, the International Association of Fire Fighters, and the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

National Neighborhood Watch



The National Neighborhood Watch program (formerly USAonWatch), a division of the National Sheriffs' Association, has worked to unite law enforcement agencies, private organizations and individual citizens in a nationwide effort to reduce crime and improve local communities. Since the terror attacks on September 11, 2001, Neighborhood Watch programs have expanded beyond their traditional crime prevention role to help neighborhoods focus on disaster preparedness, emergency response and terrorism awareness. The Neighborhood Watch program draws upon the compassion of average citizens, asking them to lend their neighbors a hand.

Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)



The Medical Reserve Corps program strengthens communities by helping medical, public health and other volunteers offer their expertise throughout the year, as well as during local emergencies and other times of community need. MRC volunteers work in coordination with existing local emergency response programs and also supplement existing community public health initiatives, such as outreach and prevention, immunization programs, blood drives, case management, care planning, and other efforts. The MRC program is administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS)



The Volunteers in Police Service program provides support and resources for agencies interested in developing or enhancing a volunteer program and for citizens who wish to volunteer their time and skills with a community law enforcement agency. VIPS works to enhance the capacity of state and local law enforcement to utilize volunteers. VIPS is funded by the Department of Justice and is managed and implemented by the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

<https://www.ready.gov/citizen-corps-partner-programs>