



Lowcountry
Community Emergency Response Team

Constitution and Bylaws

CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS

Lowcountry Community Emergency Response Team

It shall be the business and intent of this organization to treat all members in a professional and business-like manner.

ARTICLE 1 – NAME

SECTION 1 Name

This organization shall be known as the Lowcountry Community Emergency Response Team. LCERT is a non-profit organization operating under Section 501 (c) (3) of the IRS regulations.

ARTICLE II – OBJECTIVES

SECTION 1 Objectives

The objectives of this organization shall be:

- a. To remain non-profit and volunteer
- b. Dedication to the Disaster Response of lives and property of the citizens of BERKELEY, CHARLESTON, AND DORCHESTER COUNTIES, SOUTH CAROLINA, and the communities of surrounding counties at their request when they are endangered and to furnish such emergency assistance as it is within the power of the organization to do so
- c. To establish good relations and work with other organizations such as police departments, fire departments, emergency medical services, the American Red Cross, emergency preparedness department and other rescue services

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1 Membership Categories

- a. **Regular Member** – active and full membership
- b. **Veteran Member** – membership for Regular Members who become unable to maintain a full active membership due to age, health, or other special circumstances
- c. **Honorary Member** – symbolic membership awarded in recognition of exceptional support or assistance to the Organization by a non-member

SECTION 2 Regular Membership

Individuals wishing to apply for a full, “regular” membership in the Organization shall meet the following requirements and observe the following procedures:

- a. Must be a citizen or lawful resident of the United States
- b. Must reside in Berkeley, Charleston, or Dorchester County
- c. Must be eighteen (18) years of age or older
- d. Must be physically and mentally qualified to perform the essential functions or duties of the position they will hold
- e. Must have a high school degree or its equivalent
- f. Must have a valid State or Federal ID
- g. Must have completed the Basic CERT Training

SECTION 3 Veteran Membership

Veteran Membership is available for **Regular Members** who become unable to remain fully active due to age, health, or other special circumstances, and who have served as a Regular Member for a total of at least 5 years, are currently in good standing with the Organization, and wish to remain affiliated with the Organization.

Regular Members meeting the requirements outlined above, and wishing to apply for Veteran Membership in the Organization, shall submit a written request and explanation to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will vote on the request during the next regular meeting.

Veteran Members are encouraged to stay in contact, attend meetings, training, and other functions, as they are able. Veteran Members retain voting rights provided they attend at least one meeting or training each quarter to remain current on the business and activities of the Organization.

SECTION 4 Honorary Membership

Honorary Membership is a symbolic, non-voting membership, awarded by the Executive Committee, in the form of a certification or plaque, in recognition of exceptional support or assistance to the Organization by a non-member. The Executive Committee may approve honorary membership as it sees fit.

SECTION 5 Dismissal of Members

- a. A member of the Executive Committee may submit a recommendation for dismissal to the Executive Committee.
- b. The member being recommended for dismissal shall, following reasonable notice, be given an opportunity to address the Executive Committee.
- c. Following the above activities, the Executive Committee will vote on the recommendation for dismissal.
- d. Approval for the recommendation requires a two-thirds or greater vote of the Executive Committee in favor of the recommendations.
- e. The member being recommended for dismissal shall be promptly notified of the Executive Committee’s decision. If the recommendation for dismissal was approved, the member shall be informed that this action will be presented to the membership at the next regular Business Meeting.

- f. The process of dismissal of members shall follow Robert's Rules of Order.

SECTION 6

The Executive Committee may waive any requirements for the above sections under Article III.

ARTICLE IV – ORGANIZATION

SECTION 1 Executive Committee

This Executive Committee shall consist of the Director, Deputy Director, Secretary, Treasurer, and Chair of Teen CERT

SECTION 2 Appointments of additional Officers

The Elected Officers may appoint additional officers as necessary to conduct any function of the organization.

SECTION 3 Responsibilities of the Executive Committee

- a. The Executive Committee shall direct, supervise and provide for the collection and disbursement of the funds of this organization and shall be empowered to accept Federal, State, County, and/or private financial aid and any other assistance for material items that may be made available.
- b. The Executive Committee shall develop, implement, and enforce policies and procedures as necessary for the safe, effective, and efficient operations of the Organization.
- c. All disciplinary matters will be reviewed by the Executive Committee no later than the next regularly scheduled Executive Committee meeting following the incident.

SECTION 4 Office of Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be bonded at the expense of the organization.

SECTION 5 Order of Succession

- a. Director, holding the rank of Director
- b. Deputy Director/Operations Officer, holding rank of Assistant Director
- c. Secretary, holding the rank of Assistant Director
- d. Treasurer, holding the rank of Assistant Director
- e. Chairman of Teen CERT

ARTICLE V – ELECTIONS FOR OFFICE

SECTION 1 Elections

Elections shall be held the first business meeting in February of each even numbered year for the following positions:

- a. Director, holding the rank of Director
- b. Treasurer, holding the rank of Assistant Director

Elections shall be held the first business meeting in February of each odd numbered year the following positions:

- a. Deputy Director/Operations Officer, holding the rank of Assistant Director
- b. Secretary, holding the rank of Assistant Director

SECTION 2 Nominating Committee

The Director will assign one (1) person from each County to be on the nominating committee, if possible.

SECTION 3 Nominations

At the time the nominating committee makes its nominations, nominations may then come from the floor.

- a. After nominations are complete the nominating committee will oversee the election and count the votes. Voting shall be accomplished by secret ballot with a quorum of more than fifty percent (50%) of the voting membership.
- b. Absentee Ballots will not be accepted

SECTION 4 Term of Office

The term of office shall be two years in length. Officers will take office on the first of March following the election.

SECTION 5 Vacancies of Office

- a. Should a vacancy occur due to death, resignation or impeachment of an elected officer, the Director shall within 30 days appoint an interim officer subject to the approval of the simple majority of the membership present and voting. In the event, he/she does not or is unable to fill the vacancy, a special meeting of the membership will be convened to fill the vacancy.
- b. Should an elected officer be assigned to a vacant office he/she will vacate their previous office and that office will be filled according to Article V, Section 5, paragraph a.

SECTION 6 Eligibility of Elected Officers

To be eligible, a member must be an active Regular member for twelve (12) consecutive months prior to the date of election.

SECTION 7 Impeachment

- a. Persons holding elected positions may be impeached by the membership for failing to adequately fulfill the duties of their position.
- b. Any member may make a Motion to Impeach during any regular Business Meeting. If the Motion receives a Second, it shall be scheduled for a vote at the next regular Business Meeting.
- c. A majority vote in favor of impeachment, taken by secret ballot, shall cause an Elected Officer to be immediately relieved of his/her position.
- d. Meetings to vote on impeachment must meet the quorum requirements of Article VI, Section 3.

Absentee Ballots shall be placed in a plain, unmarked envelope, and this envelope placed inside a second envelope marked with “Absentee Ballot” and the absent members name.

ARTICLE VI - MEETINGS

SECTION 1 Meetings

- a. The organization will meet once per quarter to conduct training and business, unless otherwise approved by the Executive Committee.
- b. The Executive Committee will meet a minimum of once per quarter. The Executive Committee meeting will be open to all active members of the Organization. Executive Sessions may be limited to members of the Executive Committee.

SECTION 2 Special Meetings

Special Meetings may be called by the Director with ten (10) members present provided a **reasonable attempt has been made to notify** the entire membership.

SECTION 3 Quorum

- a. At regular Business Meetings, a quorum shall be (10) members.
- b. Those meetings to consider election or impeachment of officers, or changes to the Constitution, shall require a quorum of **more than** fifty (50) percent of the membership, including absentee ballots.

SECTION 4 Constitution

- a. Any amendment to the Constitution must be presented in writing to the Director and the Chair of the Constitution Committee.
- b. The Constitution Committee will study the proposed amendment and present their recommendation to the membership within 30 days from receipt of the written request.
- c. Amendments to the Constitution must be voted on by the membership **in accordance with Article VI.**

ARTICLE VII – COMMITTEES

SECTION 1 Appointment

All committees shall be appointed by the Director or in his/her absence by the Deputy Director.

SECTION 2 Membership

All members will have an opportunity to sign up for the committee of his/her choice and are encouraged to do so.

ARTICLE VIII – UNIFORMS

SECTION 1 Approved Uniform

Uniforms and patches shall conform to current regulations as set forth by the uniform committee and approved by the Executive Committee.

SECTION 2 Wearing Uniforms

Members are encouraged to wear uniforms at meetings, missions, etc.

SECTION 3 Personal Protective Equipment

Appropriate personal protective equipment will be used as detailed in the Policies and Procedures.

ARTICLE IX – PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

SECTION 1 Robert’s Rules of Order

The **most recent version available** of Robert’s Rules of Order shall be used by the organization and maintained by the secretary.

ARTICLE X – CONTROL

SECTION 1 Administrative and Operational Control

Permanent administrative and operational control shall remain within this organization.

SECTION 2 Donations

Individuals and organizations offering pieces of equipment and/or monies shall be made to fully understand the contents of Article X, Section 1 prior to the donation of any equipment and/or monies.

SECTION 3 Expenditures Requiring Membership Approval

The Director is authorized to make expenditures of up to \$2,000.00.

- a. Other expenditures greater than \$2000.00 for non-budget items must have approval of the membership by a simple majority vote.
- b. Expenditures for emergencies or critical repairs as deemed by the Executive Committee shall not require membership approval. Members will be advised at the next scheduled meeting.

BYLAWS

1. A regular member will be required to fulfill attendance requirement set forth in the Policy and Procedures.
2. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once per quarter.
3. Any questions by outsiders at any mission will be directed to the Senior Ranking Officer from the respective County or PIO on the scene.
4. The Senior Officer present will be in charge unless an individual member has been previously designated.
5. No member will come to a mission under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
6. All members are encouraged to participate in regular training sessions.
7. It is recommended that all committees shall have a minimum of one (1) person from each county.

Certified True Copy:

Original document is signed

Original document is signed

Secretary

Director

DOCUMENT CONTROL PAGE

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