



F29 An Overview of the Certified Emergency Manager (CEM)

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After attending this presentation, attendees will gain knowledge of the CEM designation and understand its importance for effective emergency response.

This presentation will impact the forensic community and/or humanity by assisting attendees to see the need for extensive cross training to deliver a timely response post-incident.

Events of the recent past have shown the worldwide vulnerability to both man-made and natural disasters. The post-incident response and recovery of the affected area involves differing areas of expertise. Coordination between multi-agency responders ensures affective and timely resolution of the event.

The Certified Emergency Manager (CEM) designation is an internationally recognized certification. Emergency management today has a comprehensive, all-hazards, and risk-based approach to all phases of an emergency: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. Public and safety and the fire service are no longer the sole leaders in emergencies.

The National Response Plan (NRP) and the enactment of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) dictate minimum standards for training. The requirements of the CEM program and certification satisfy these parameters. NIMS compliance is especially important to jurisdictions that rely heavily on funding from the various Department of Homeland Security grants.

The applicant needs a minimum of three years of emergency management experience. Actual disaster response or participation in full-scale exercises will satisfy this requirement. The applicant also needs any four year baccalaureate degree. In some circumstances, additional experience may be substituted. Three professional references are required as well as one from a current supervisor.

One hundred hours of continuing education is required in emergency management. General management training has a minimum of one hundred contact hours. The caveat to these requirements is that no more than twenty-five percent be in any one topic.

The applicant must be able to prove that he or she has made a personal investment to the emergency management profession. There must be six different contributions to satisfy the CEM requirements. Acceptable submissions may include professional membership, speaking engagements, and publication. The individual may include service on a volunteer board such as a LEPC (local emergency planning commission), if it is not part of the applicant's day-to-day work activities.

The ability to oversee and respond to a real-life scenario is based on the applicant's essay. This essay, consisting of approximately 1000 words tests the individual's ability to integrate their knowledge and skills to deliver an effective outcome.

The application is then reviewed in its entirety by the CEM commission as to its acceptability. If all requirements have been successfully fulfilled the candidate is eligible for the exam. The multiple-choice exam consists of one hundred questions encompassing all four phases of emergency management. A minimum score of seventy-five is needed to pass the exam.

Certification as a CEM is for a five-year period. At the end of this interval the CEM must submit documentation for re-certification. In this time, the individual must show one hundred hours of continuing education with seventy-five hours in emergency management and twenty-five hours in general management training. Proof must be shown for six additional contributions to the profession since the last certification.

The complexity of disasters such as Hurricane Katrina and the World Trade Center preclude a multi-agency response. The integration of the separate entities is vital to attain an effective and timely response with little duplication of effort. The CEM program is a means to credential individuals who will pursue these objectives.

Certified Emergency Manager, National Incident Management System, Disasters