



FEMA Youth Preparedness Council Application Process

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When are applications due?

Applications, letters of recommendation and supporting materials must be received by February 24, 2014, 11:59 p.m. EST.

Who can apply to serve on the Youth Preparedness Council?

Each applicant must be between the ages of 12 and 17 years old and have done one or more of the following:

- Contributed to disaster preparedness in his or her community,
- Lived through a disaster and shared his or her experiences, or
- Participated in a local Citizen Corps Council, Teen CERT program or another youth preparedness program.

I am 17 now but will turn 18 during the next year—am I still eligible to apply?

Yes! You must be 17 or younger at the time your application is submitted. However, if selected, you would still be eligible to serve even if you turn 18 during your term on the Council. Please note that you would also still be eligible for a second year on the Council, even if you will be older than 18 at that time.

How should the application be submitted?

All Youth Preparedness Council (YPC) application materials must be sent to FEMA-Youth-Preparedness-Council@fema.dhs.gov with the subject line "[Applicant's First Name] [Applicant's Last Name] YPC Application". All application materials (application form, two [2] letters of recommendation and any optional supplemental materials) must be submitted in **one (1)** email. Letters of recommendation must be submitted in PDF format. All attachments must follow the file naming conventions described in the application instructions.

If email size constraints limit the size of attachments you can send, you may want to consider the following for reducing file sizes:

- Send links to websites with supporting materials, videos and information, rather than attaching the files.
- Compress pictures or reduce the resolution of pictures.
- Convert text and/or images to PDF files.

Should you encounter any problems or difficulty in submitting your application materials, please contact FEMA at FEMA-Youth-Preparedness-Council@fema.dhs.gov.



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I know someone who would be great for the Council—can I nominate him or her?

The application process for the Youth Preparedness Council has changed slightly this year and nominations for eligible candidates will no longer be accepted. FEMA will only consider applications submitted directly by the applicant. You are encouraged to share the application with those interested in applying. This year, each application also requires two (2) letters of recommendation (which must be submitted in the same email as the application), so writing a letter of recommendation is a great way to show your support and provide input into the application process.

I applied last year and was not selected to the Council—can I apply again?

Yes! Unfortunately, FEMA is unable to accept all of the qualified applicants in a given year. Spots open up every year and previous applicants are encouraged to reapply. There is a space on the application form to indicate whether you have previously applied to the Council.

Do I have to submit a letter of recommendation?

Yes. You must submit **two (2)** letters of recommendation from two (2) adults with your application. Applications received without two (2) letters of recommendation will not be reviewed.

Can anyone write a letter of recommendation for a Youth Preparedness Council application?

Letters of recommendation can come from anyone 18 years of age or older. At least one of the letters must come from someone who can speak to the applicant's preparedness- and/or disaster-related experience—which could be from preparedness programs, experiencing a disaster, etc. The second letter of recommendation can come from any adult. Examples of people who may write letters of recommendation include group leaders, parents, guardians, teachers, school administrators, local first responders, Citizen Corps Council or CERT Program members, neighbors or anyone who is familiar with the applicant.

How do I fill out the application form?

All responses must be input directly into the application form, which is an editable PDF. You can type content directly into the response fields and will also be able to save the file with your responses in it.

To view and edit the file, make sure you have the most recent version of Adobe Reader. You can download Adobe Reader at <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>.

The file must be saved with the file name "[Applicant's First Name]_[Applicant's Last Name]_ApplicationForm". The file must then be emailed as an attachment, along with two (2) letters of recommendation and any supplemental materials that are being provided, to FEMA-Youth-Preparedness-Council@fema.dhs.gov.



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What are the requirements for the narrative responses?

All narrative response questions/topics must be addressed. Please adhere to the character limit (with spaces) provided for each response. Once you have reached the limit, the application will not accept any more characters. You may need to rework your response to fit within the designated character allotment.

Can someone who serves on a local Citizen Corps Council or Partner Program or Affiliate (e.g., Teen CERT, Medical Reserve Corps, Fire Corps, Volunteers in Police Service, Neighborhood Watch) apply to serve on the Council?

Any individual between the ages of 12 and 17 who is engaged in individual and community preparedness activities may apply to serve on the Youth Preparedness Council.

Do applications need to address a specific type of youth disaster preparedness activity?

Applicants are asked to submit any examples of disaster preparedness activities, personal experiences with disasters or disaster response activities that would qualify them to serve on the Council. The narrative response section of the application form includes space for describing up to three (3) examples of experiences related to disasters or youth preparedness.

Sample preparedness activities include but are not limited to:

- Teen CERT training
- Citizen Corps programs
- After-school activities
- Youth preparedness activities through a faith-based group
- Disaster preparedness camps
- Youth club activities (e.g., Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts)
- National Preparedness Month participation
- Increasing local disaster awareness
- Rural area preparedness activities
- Using social media to further disaster preparedness
- Pet/service animal preparedness
- Underrepresented community programs

What types of supplemental materials can I submit?

You can submit any materials that you feel would strengthen or support your application. Possible supplemental materials include newspaper articles about a preparedness or disaster response activity in which you participated, preparedness materials that you developed or video of a preparedness activity in which you participated. Be creative! Showing your activities and impact will strengthen your application. All supplemental materials, if provided, must be included in the same email as the rest of the application materials and use the file naming convention

"[Applicant's First Name]_[Applicant's Last Name]_Supplement1",

"[Applicant's First Name]_[Applicant's Last Name]_Supplement2", etc. Please note that supplemental materials are **not** required.



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How will an applicant know his or her application was received by FEMA?

An email confirmation will be sent to the applicant confirming receipt of his or her application upon receipt. If you do not receive a confirmation email within three (3) business days, please re-send your application. Additionally, all applicants will be notified in May 2014 as to whether they were selected for the Council.

How will the applications be reviewed?

National and regional FEMA representatives will review applications. Each state and territory falls into one of ten (10) FEMA regions (the states and territories in each region can be seen here: <http://www.fema.gov/regional-operations>), and each region has a Community Preparedness Officer (CPO). Applications will be reviewed by both Headquarters staff and the CPO of the region in which the applicant lives. New Youth Preparedness Council members will be announced in May 2014.

Are there any monetary rewards associated with being selected for the Youth Preparedness Council?

There is no cash reward associated with being selected for the Youth Preparedness Council.

What is required of Youth Preparedness Council members?

Participants are expected to represent the youth perspective on emergency preparedness and share information with their communities. Each Council member is expected to develop and complete at least one (1) youth preparedness-related project specific to his or her region and interests, as well as to pursue other preparedness-related opportunities in his or her community. In addition to attending the **mandatory** Youth Preparedness Council Summit in July of 2014, Council members will potentially participate in national, regional, state and local preparedness meetings and present their work. It is expected that members will meet with FEMA on a regular basis via conference call to provide ongoing input on strategies, initiatives and projects throughout the duration of their term. Please see the *FEMA Youth Preparedness Council Member Roles and Responsibilities* document for more information.

How long is the term of a member?

Once selected, a member serves on the Council for one (1) year. The member may be invited to extend his or her membership for an additional year through a formal request from FEMA.

What is the Youth Preparedness Council Summit? When is it held?

The Youth Preparedness Council Summit is an opportunity for Council members to meet one another and FEMA representatives, including their Regional CPOs, who will be their ongoing FEMA support contacts and mentors. Council members will be able to share their experiences, ideas, solutions and questions on youth disaster preparedness with FEMA, national partners engaged in youth preparedness work, other Council members and selected federal officials. Council members also will receive their official certificates of membership during a ceremony at the Summit. For each Council member under the age of 18, a parent/guardian or parent-authorized chaperone must attend. The Summit includes sessions



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for parents/guardians/chaperones. FEMA will reimburse travel, lodging and expenses for each Council member and his or her parent/guardian/chaperone to attend the Summit. Please note that attendance at the Summit is mandatory for those selected to the Council. The Summit will be held towards the end of July 2014.

Please email additional questions to FEMA-Youth-Preparedness-Council@fema.dhs.gov. Thank you.