



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GENERAL

Q. What are the Individual and Community Preparedness Awards?

Now in its sixth year, the Individual and Community Preparedness Awards program (formerly the Citizen Corps Achievement Awards) is a national recognition program that highlights innovative local practices and achievements by recognizing individuals and organizations that have made outstanding contributions toward making their communities safer, stronger, better prepared, and more resilient.

Q. What is the deadline for award submissions?

The deadline for award submissions is May 30, 2014 by 11:59 P.M. E.T.

Q. Where can I submit an awards application?

You can submit an application to citizencorps@fema.dhs.gov. Please make sure to include "2014 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award Application" in the subject line.

Q. What is the period during which an applicant's activities or programs must have occurred in order to be eligible for a 2014 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award?

The applicant's activities, initiatives, or programs must have occurred between January 1, 2013 and May 30, 2014 to be considered for a 2014 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award.

Q. Can you provide a description of each award category?

Award Categories:

Outstanding State Citizen Corps Council Initiatives

Presented to a State Citizen Corps Council that demonstrates sustainable and innovative practices and noteworthy achievements that make the State safer, stronger, and better prepared to manage any emergency situation.

Outstanding Local Citizen Corps Council Initiatives

Presented to a Local Citizen Corps Council that demonstrates sustainable and innovative practices and noteworthy achievements that collectively make the local community safer, stronger, and better prepared to manage any emergency situation.

Outstanding Community Emergency Response Team Initiatives

Presented to a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) or Program that has made a significant contribution to response and/or recovery efforts during a disaster; and/or has demonstrated innovation in operations, outreach, or training practices; and/or excels in educating community members about disaster response skills and preparedness.

Outstanding Achievement in Youth Preparedness



Presented to an organization or program that engages youth in its initiatives to educate the whole community in disaster preparedness. The organization or program selected will embody a mission focused on youth preparedness and will excel in informing youth about being prepared for any disaster event.

Preparing the Whole Community

Presented to an organization or program that successfully reaches out to all aspects of its community in order to improve resiliency and emergency management outcomes, including local, tribal, state and territorial partners; non-governmental organizations such as faith-based and non-profit groups and private sector industry; individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs; and other individuals and families.

Awareness to Action

Presented to an organization, individual, or program that uses effective messaging techniques and activities that not only raise awareness about hazards and disaster preparedness, but also persuade members of the general public to take action to prepare themselves, their families, and their communities. Eligible activities include exercises, drills, trainings, events, and awareness campaigns.

Survivor Empowerment and Integration

Presented to an organization, individual, or program that has developed tools, processes, or techniques that account for and support the immediate, independent, and mass response actions of survivors during and after disasters, combining government capabilities with the collective intelligence and efforts of citizens. Eligible activities include working with whole community stakeholder organizations to identify and incorporate survivor input, capabilities, and contributions into organizational doctrine, developing an effective process for information to be collected from and shared with survivors during a disaster, and effectively integrating survivors into disaster response and recovery efforts.

Technological Innovation

Presented to an individual, organization, or program that demonstrates a creative and effective use of current technology, or has developed a new technology that improves the ability of individuals and communities to prepare for, respond to, or recover from disasters.

Community Preparedness Heroes

Community Preparedness Heroes are individuals who will be recognized for their outstanding commitment, achievements, and leadership in disaster preparedness and response in their communities.

ELIGIBILITY AND CRITERIA

Q. Who can apply for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award?

Any individual, program, or organization engaged in individual and community preparedness may submit an application for a 2014 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award. This includes individuals, local government officials and organizations (e.g. tribal councils, mayors, local emergency managers, Local Emergency Planning Councils, homeland security



task forces, civic or volunteer committees, registered Citizen Corps Councils, CERTs, and Citizen Corps Partner Programs and affiliates. Partner Programs include Fire Corps, USA on Watch, Medical Reserve Corps, Volunteers in Police Service, and CERT programs. A full list of all affiliates can be found at <http://www.ready.gov/citizen-corps-affiliate-programs>

Non-affiliated individuals and organizations are also encouraged to apply, but are required to include a letter of recommendation or written endorsement from a local government official or organization (see list above), or a Citizen Corps Partner Program or affiliate, with their application materials. To find a Citizen Corps Council or Partner Program near you, visit <https://www.citizencorps.fema.gov/cc/searchCouncil.do?submitByZip>. Enter your ZIP code to find Councils and Partner Programs in your area.

Q. Is a nomination required to be eligible for the FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Awards?

Local government officials and organizations, as well as Citizen Corps Partner Programs and affiliates, may submit an award application without a nomination. However, individuals and organizations not affiliated with Citizen Corps are required to include a letter of recommendation or a written endorsement from a local government official or organization, or a Citizen Corps Partner Program or affiliate, as part of their application.

Q. If an applicant is required to include a letter of recommendation or written endorsement from a local government official or organization, how are local government officials and/or organizations being defined?

Local government officials and organizations can be defined as mayors, local emergency managers, Local Emergency Planning Councils, homeland security task forces, civic or volunteer committees, registered Citizen Corps Councils, registered CERT programs or Citizen Corps Partner Programs and affiliates.

Q. Where can an applicant find a list of the Citizen Corps Partner Programs and affiliates authorized to provide a letter of recommendation or written endorsement for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award?

A list of Partner Programs that can provide a letter of recommendation or written endorsement for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award can be found at <http://www.ready.gov/citizen-corps-partner-programs>. A list of eligible affiliates can be found at <http://www.ready.gov/citizen-corps-affiliate-programs>. Local government officials and organizations that may provide a letter of recommendation or written endorsement include mayors, local emergency managers, local emergency planning councils, homeland security task forces, civic or volunteer committees and registered Citizen Corps Councils and CERT programs.

To find a Citizen Corps Council or Partner Program near you, visit <https://www.citizencorps.fema.gov/cc/searchCouncil.do?submitByZip>. Enter your ZIP code to find Councils and Partner Programs in your area.

Q. Can anyone endorse or write a letter of recommendation for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award applicant?



Written endorsements and letters of recommendation must come from local government officials and organizations or Citizen Corps Partner Programs or affiliates. For a list of Partner Programs and affiliates that can provide a letter of recommendation or written endorsement for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award, please visit <http://www.ready.gov/citizen-corps-partner-programs>.

Q. Does a Citizen Corps Council have to be registered to be nominated for an award?

All nominated Citizen Corps Councils must be registered and approved on <https://www.citizencorps.fema.gov/cc/secure/index.do> as of May 30, 2014 to be considered for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award.

Q. Can a local Citizen Corps Partner Program or Affiliate (e.g. CERT, Medical Reserve Corps, Fire Corps, Volunteers in Police Service, Neighborhood Watch) be nominated for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award?

Any individual or organization engaged in individual and community preparedness may be nominated for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award.

Q. Can a CERT and Medical Reserve Corps team be jointly nominated for a FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award?

Multiple individuals and organizations may be jointly nominated for an award.

Q. Can previous applicants try again this year?

Previous applicants may apply for an award again this year as long as the information they provide is updated to include activities taking place between January 1, 2013 and May 30, 2014.

Q. Can previous winners apply again this year?

Previous award winners and honorable mentions may apply again this year. FEMA will accept updated language and supporting materials from previous applications that includes activities taking place during this year's award period (January 1, 2013 through May 30, 2014).

Q. Can applicants apply for more than one award category?

Applicants may apply for up to two award categories, but should only submit one application package or have one submitted on their behalf. Although submissions for up to two award categories will be accepted, applicants are encouraged to focus on describing, in detail, one aspect of their organization, program, initiative, etc., rather than providing general information about multiple activities.

SELECTION PROCESS AND AWARDS

Q. How will the award submissions be reviewed?

Award submissions will be reviewed by FEMA, the International Association of Emergency Managers, National Emergency Management Association, the American Red Cross, Target, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Award winners are expected to be announced in Fall 2014.



Q. What is the John D. Solomon Whole Community Preparedness Award?

The John D. Solomon Whole Community Preparedness Award is named for the late creator of the groundbreaking blog, *In Case of Emergency, Read Blog: A Citizen's Eye View Of Public Preparedness*. John's work was striking in its reporting, analysis, engagement, and impact in preparing the public, informing professionals, and bringing about change in both the public and private sectors. John organized conferences, devised legislation, posted interviews, evaluated how government and non-government organizations were using social media tools, promoted others' initiatives to policy makers, organized contests to foster citizen preparedness, and interviewed emergency management leaders, including FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate, for preparedness tips for his video series "What Should I Tell the Public?"

Administrator Fugate once stated that John "set the standard for what it means to be part of our nation's emergency management team." In the spirit of the inclusive and collaborative nature of his work, the John D. Solomon Whole Community Preparedness Award is presented to the winner of the *Preparing the Whole Community* category.

Q. Are there any monetary rewards associated with the awards? What is meant by "community preparedness roundtable"?

There is no cash award associated with the FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Awards; however, winners will be invited to attend an awards presentation and community preparedness roundtable event. The date and location of the roundtable is TBD. Winners will receive their awards during a ceremony and will also share their experiences, ideas, solutions and questions on community preparedness with other award winners and selected officials.

Q. When will winners of the 2014 Individual and Community Preparedness Awards be announced?

Winners of the 2014 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Awards should be announced Fall 2014.

Q. Can I view last year's winners and finalists or those from previous years?

You can learn more about the Individual and Community Preparedness Award Honorees from previous years by visiting <http://www.ready.gov/citizen-corps-awards>.

You can also learn more about the 2012 and 2013 winners here:

[White House Champions of Change
2012 and 2013 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award Winners
White House Blog
FEMA Blog](#)

COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM



Q. Do applications need to specifically address an award category in the application?

Applicants are asked to submit examples of outstanding achievements in individual and community preparedness they deem worthy of recognition. Applicants should highlight specific initiatives, events, programs, and outreach efforts aligned to one of the following categories:

- Outstanding State Citizen Corps Council Initiatives
- Outstanding Local Citizen Corps Council Initiatives
- Outstanding Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Initiatives
- Outstanding Youth Preparedness Initiative
- Preparing the Whole Community
- Awareness to Action
- Survivor Empowerment and Integration
- Technological Innovation
- Community Preparedness Heroes

Q. If an applicant has been working on more than one initiative, should there be one application that includes all of the initiatives or one application for each initiative?

Each nominee may only submit one application package, or have one package submitted on their behalf. Although FEMA permits applicants to submit one award package for up to two award categories, applicants are encouraged to focus on describing, in detail, one aspect of their organization, program, initiative, etc. instead of providing more general information about multiple activities.

Q. How should an applicant submit an awards application?

Applications and supporting materials must be received by May 30, 2014, 11:59 p.m. E.T. Supporting materials should be sent to citizencorps@fema.dhs.gov with the subject line: “**2014 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award Application.**” For your convenience, and our own, please submit your application and supporting materials electronically only, via e-mail. Should you encounter any problems or difficulty in submitting your application materials in an electronic format, please contact us at citizencorps@fema.dhs.gov.

Q. How will an applicant know his or her award submission was received by FEMA?

Once an award application is submitted and is received by FEMA, an e-mail notice of receipt will be sent to the applicant.

Q. How can an applicant reduce the award application and/or supporting material file size to align with the recommended file size guidelines?

FEMA recommends applicants keep the narrative describing the individual(s), program(s), initiative(s), and/or activity(ies) being submitted for recognition between **two and five pages**. Supplemental materials are welcome but not required. If included, supplemental materials should not exceed three attachments or **five megabytes (5 MB)**. Zip files count as single attachments, but please keep in mind that the awards inbox has a limited amount of space. Large attachments may cause the inbox to reject the file. The following are a few recommendations for condensing files and instructions on how to do so:



Compressing pictures (Instructions based on Microsoft Office 2007):

1. Click the picture that you want to compress.
2. Under **Picture Tools**, on the **Format** tab, in the **Adjust** group, click **Compress Pictures**.
3. To compress the selected picture only and not all of the pictures in the document, select the **Apply to Selected Pictures Only** check box.
4. Click **Options** and then, under **Compression Options**, select the **Automatically Perform Basic Compression** on **Save** check box.

Reducing the resolution of pictures (Instructions based on Microsoft Office 2007):

1. Click the picture for which you want to change the resolution.
2. Under **Picture Tools**, on the **Format** tab, in the **Adjust** group, click **Compress Pictures**.
3. To change the resolution for the selected picture only and not all of the pictures in the document, select the **Apply to Selected Pictures Only** check box.
4. Click **Options** and then, under **Target Output**, click the resolution that you want.

Sending website links to supporting materials, videos, and informational products instead of attaching the materials themselves.

Converting files to PDF (Instructions based on Microsoft Office 2007):

1. Click the **Microsoft Office** Button in the top left corner, point to the arrow next to **Save As**, and then click **PDF** or **XPS**.
2. In the **File Name** list, type or select a name for the file.
3. In the **Save as Type** list, click **PDF**.
4. If you want to open the file immediately after saving it, select the **Open File After Publishing** check box. This check box is available only if you have a PDF reader installed on your computer.
5. Next to **Optimize** for, click **Minimum Size** to reduce the file size.
6. To specify various options for the file, click **Options**. Once you are finished, click **OK**.
7. Click **Publish**. If you want to make changes to the PDF after saving it, return to your original Microsoft Office 2007 system file in which you created it and save the file as PDF again.

Please e-mail additional questions to citizencorps@fema.dhs.gov. Thank you.