



FEMA Youth Preparedness Council Application Process

Frequently Asked Questions

When are applications due?

Applications, letters of recommendation, and supporting materials must be received by March 2, 2015, 11:59 p.m. EST.

Who can apply to serve on the Youth Preparedness Council?

Each applicant must be between the ages of 13 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 other youth preparedness program.

Please note that the age range for the Council has changed this year. You must be at least 13 years old, and no more than 17 years old, at the time you apply.

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 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. Links can be input directly into the "Description" fields in the "Supplemental Materials" section of the application.
- Compress pictures or reduce the resolution of pictures.
- Convert text and/or images to PDF files.



How do I fill out the application form?

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/>. All responses **must** be input directly into the application form, which is an editable PDF form.

To fill out the application, click on the link “FEMA Youth Preparedness Council Application Form” at www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness-council. Be sure to save a **downloaded** copy of the PDF to your computer. Please type your answers directly into the form. Then, save the file with your responses. Please name your file using the following format: “[Applicant’s First Name]_[Applicant’s Last Name]_ApplicationForm”.

The file must 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.

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

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

We encourage you to share the application with youth you think would be a good fit for the Council! However, FEMA will only consider applications submitted directly by the applicant. Each application **must include** 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 (1) of the letters must come from an adult who can speak to the applicant’s experience with preparedness and/or disaster(s)—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.



What are the requirements for the narrative responses?

All narrative response questions/topics must be addressed. Please adhere to the character limit (including 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 13 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:

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

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 following 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. If you do not receive a confirmation email within five (5) business days, please re-send your application. Additionally, all applicants will be notified in May 2015 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 (1) 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 2015.

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 2015, 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 receive their official certificates of membership during a ceremony at 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 2015.



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A parent/guardian or parent-authorized chaperone must attend with each Council member. The Summit includes sessions for parents/guardians/chaperones. FEMA will reimburse travel, lodging, and meals and incidental expenses for each Council member and his or her parent/guardian/chaperone to attend the Summit. Additional information about expense reimbursement is provided in the response to the next question.

Is there a cost associated with the Summit?

Council members and chaperones will be reimbursed for expenses associated with the Summit; however, please note that many of these expenses need to be paid for up front by the Council member/chaperone and will be reimbursed by FEMA *after* the Summit. Council members and their chaperones are reimbursed for:

- **Travel** via common carrier—air, rail, or bus transportation. This includes transportation to and from the airport, train station, etc. Transportation to and from Summit-related events (e.g., a taxi to a field trip that is part of the Summit, or to the mandatory dinner held as part of the Summit) can also be reimbursed. Parking is not included. Transportation for personal excursions, such as sightseeing, will not be reimbursed.
- **Lodging**. FEMA will provide a lodging option that is within the government daily rate, which is the maximum rate that can be reimbursed.
- **Meals & incidental expenses**. These are reimbursed at a flat, per diem rate.

There will be a session at the Summit for parents/guardians/chaperones to learn about reimbursement.

Additional Questions

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