



Mesa Fire Department CERT Program Standard Operating Procedures



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Purpose

The Mesa Fire Department accomplishes its Mission through members working together to achieve common goals. Organizational success depends on individual members sharing values in order to achieve desired outcomes. Communicating the mission, organizational values, and goals is the responsibility of the Fire Chief.

The intent of the Values and Organization volume is to help members understand the Fire Department organization and empower them to carry out the mission.

Fire Department emergency and non-emergency services has become a highly technical profession comprised of many essential and related functions. We, as members of the Mesa Fire Department, are expected to maintain high a standard of service delivery and personal conduct. We are expected to perform emergency, non-emergency and routine tasks in an efficient and uniform manner.

This volume will help members become familiar with the organizational values, structure, and various policies and procedures.

Intent

The procedural volumes will help members understand how to function within the fire department organization through the use of standardized policies and procedures. These procedures are to assist the Department, in conjunction with the City of Mesa Personnel Rules and Management Policies. The City of Mesa's Personnel Rules and Management Policies will supersede these procedures, in the event of a conflict. CERT Standard Operating Procedures are in addition to the Volunteer and Department Procedures.

Due to the dangerous and changing environments fire department members may find themselves in, members must use good judgment when a formal procedure does not exist.

It will be the responsibility of each member to thoroughly read and become familiar with the Fire Department procedural volumes. In the event that a member needs clarification of any part of these texts, he/she should seek answers through the chain-of-command. The Mesa Fire Department encourages members to make recommendations that may improve the operation of the Fire Department, through proper channels. Please take great pride in your contribution toward the efficient and safe operation of the Mesa Fire Department.

Mission Statement

We will provide our customers (the residents, businesses, and visitors of Mesa) with the highest level of protection against the loss of life and property. We recognize that we are an integral part of the community and are sensitive and responsive to neighborhood needs and priorities.

We are dedicated to service as highly trained professionals in all aspects of rescue, emergency medical services, fire prevention and suppression, and the control of hazardous situations.

We uphold this commitment through quality emergency services and proactive emphasis on public education, code enforcement, hazard investigation, innovative life and fire safety awareness, and community service. This quality is supported through our commitment to maintain a positive, productive, and healthy work force through which these services are delivered.



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Vision

We Value A Creative and Proactive Work Place

We Are All Valued Members Of The Diverse Mesa Fire Department Family

- Team-Oriented
- Open Communication At All Levels
- Positive Environment
- Input Is Valued
- Respect For One Another
- Compassion Toward One Another

We Are Professional In Our Actions

- Appearance and Behavior
- Courteous Attitude
- High Quality Service
- Honesty, Fairness, and Integrity
- Understanding and Compassion For Others
- Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Economy

We Strive For Excellence

- Public And Member Safety
- Unity, Teamwork, and Leadership
- Personal Health, Well-being, and Fitness
- Personal and Professional Development
- Training, Preparedness, and Readiness

Performance Guarantee

As an organization and as individual members of the Mesa Fire Department, we will do the things that we say we will, try our best to do them well, every time, and care about our customers, their property, and each other.

Uniforms

Work Shirt

Issued by MFD. Must be returned to MFD upon departure from the CERT Program.

Work Pant

Conservative style (not form fitting). Shorts may be worn only at public education events.

Work Shoes

Closed toed shoes are required. Black Safety shoes are recommended.

Work Belt

Width to be 1-1/4" minimum to 1-1/2" maximum for work uniform. Color of buckle to be silver or black - chief officers are only to wear gold.

All clothing must fit the individual properly, not be too baggy or not be too form fitting. Shorts must be of an appropriate length (covering a modest portion of the thigh and not below the knees) and must be worn at the waist.



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Personal Appearance

Maintaining a professional public image is essential to our organization as the public judges a fire protection organization by the appearance of its members. The length of the hair, and facial hair, should not interfere with personal or operational safety. It is essential that we comply with the following rules to support a sense of pride held by all members of our organization.

All members shall maintain a clean and neat appearance at all times. This includes personal hygiene such as being groomed, clean-shaven, and having a clean, well maintained uniform. In compliance with current NFPA and OSHA standards, beards or facial hair that interferes or contacts the face piece seal, shall be prohibited for members that are required to use respiratory protection equipment.

All Supervisors have an obligation to enforce the policy any time he/she feels that safety is an issue or the neat, professional appearance is not being followed.

Hair/Body Art

Hair shall be well groomed, neat in appearance, and be worn in a style that is related to current community standards. Hair styles, hair colors, or tattoos that are considered radical or distract from the appearance of the uniform, shall not be worn.

Fingernails must be neatly trimmed and clean. Females may wear conservative colored fingernail polish.

Makeup must be conservative and not draw undue attention to the volunteer.

Jewelry

Jewelry, bracelets or necklaces that are considered a safety hazard, radical, or distract from the appearance of the uniform, shall not be worn. Necklaces shall not be worn exposed. Earrings may be worn in a "post style" on the lower lobe of the ear. No facial jewelry shall be permitted. A wristwatch is recommended. Sunglasses should be of contemporary style, modest in color and not detract from the uniform.



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Conduct

The following list of directives represents the personal conduct standards for members of the Mesa Fire Department.

Every member of the Mesa Fire Department is expected to conduct him or herself in a highly self-disciplined manner and is responsible for his/her conduct in a positive, productive, and mature way.

ALL MEMBERS SHALL:

1. Follow all written directives of both the Mesa Fire Department and the City of Mesa.
2. Use their training and capabilities to protect the public.
3. Treat with respect the public, City and Department employees regardless of race, sex, religion, color, national origin, age, marital status, or disability.
4. Work competently in their positions to cause all department programs to operate effectively.
5. Always reflect credit on themselves and the department.
6. If serving or acting in a supervisory capacity, manage in an effective and considerate manner.
7. Always act in a manner that creates good order within the department.
8. Keep mentally and physically fit to perform the essential functions of your position.
9. Be concerned and protective of each member's welfare.
10. Observe the work hours of their position. In constant-staffed positions, the work hours conclude when properly relieved or when authorized.
11. Wear the Fire Department work or dress uniforms only while on-duty or when representing the Department in an official capacity. The uniform, when worn, must be complete and never mixed with civilian clothes i.e., wearing the work uniform with other than the black regulation work shoes, etc. The wearing of any uniform article in violation of these rules is strictly prohibited.
12. Not smoke within any City or public buildings or vehicles, or any time a building is designated as smoke free.
13. Not smoke while in uniform.
14. Not engage in activities that are detrimental to the Department or City. The presence or display of potentially offensive or sexually suggestive materials at a fire facility is prohibited. Uses of alcoholic beverages, debilitating drugs or substances, which could impair physical and/or mental capacities, or engaging in sexual activity while on duty are actions, which are strictly prohibited.



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Discipline

Depending on the severity of the offense, a volunteer can be disciplined in any of the following manners depending on Supervisor's discretion:

Unfounded / Exonerated – Investigation found no grounds for action.

Performance Counseling Note - Counseling by a supervisor to make an employee aware of unacceptable conduct or performance, and outlining a course of action to remedy the problem.

Verbal Reprimand – Disciplinary action by a supervisor to make an employee aware of unacceptable conduct or performance, and outlining a course of action to remedy the problem. This document to remain in member's local file for 3 years. The document may then be removed with the discretion of the member's immediate supervisor.

Written Reprimand – Written documentation to make a volunteer aware of unacceptable conduct or performance, and outlining a course of action to remedy the problem.

Disciplinary Probation – A probationary period for disciplinary purposes not to exceed 12 months and cannot be extended.

Suspension – Time off for a specified period of time.

Demotion – The movement of a volunteer from (1) class to another class having a lower status. (I.e. CERT member level 4 to level 5)

Termination – The separation of a volunteer from service for cause.

Near Miss/Close Call Reporting

Purpose

Members of the Fire Department should seek and explore every avenue that might lead to increased safety for all members. Reporting near miss/close call incidents helps to further the goal of making our fire department safer by challenging current operational standards and human behaviors. The goal of near miss/close call reporting is to identify specific areas that department members can improve, thus preventing an accident.

Members should report near miss/close calls, even when the incident may have been their fault. Members using this format of communication should be recognized for their concern of other members' safety. Near miss/close call reporting is a positive step toward ensuring the safety of all members. Near miss/close call reporting is intended to be a method of communicating to all fire department members how future possible accidents may be prevented.

Definition

A description of a near miss or close call would include the following:

- Incidents in which members may have been injured, had they followed fire department standard operating procedures.
- Any incident involving fire department apparatus/vehicles that cause the driver to use swift collision avoidance behaviors.
- Any training activity, where due to the failure of equipment or the failure to follow standard operating procedures, could have resulted in member injuries.



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- ❑ Encounters with hazardous materials that could have resulted in higher quantities of released material due to fire department operations.
- ❑ Operations in roadways (or near roadways) where members encounter private or public vehicles being driven inside of fire department work zones.
- ❑ Operations that mistakenly place fire department members in, or near, unexpected high risk or violent environments.
- ❑ Technical rescue or recovery operations where members performed functions that could have resulted in injury.
- ❑ Incident scenes where other local, state or federal agencies had operations that placed fire department members at risk of being injured.
- ❑ Environmental conditions that created a situation where members may have been injured while operating at an incident scene.

Any other situation where an event occurred and fire department members could have been injured.

Procedure

Volunteers should report any Near Miss/Close Call to their supervisor immediately. The volunteer should also provide the supervisor with a written report of the near miss. Include a brief narrative, with any supportive information. The supervisor may call him or her for needed additional information.

Vehicle Collision/Property Damage

PROCEDURES

- A. Members driving a City of Mesa vehicle or personal vehicle on City business, involved in a collision, will immediately assess the need for emergency medical services and request, if needed, assistance from the appropriate agency. If damage is sustained or created to a City vehicle, another vehicle, or property or an injury is caused, the employee will immediately notify their supervisor. The Safety Captain will be paged through Alarm and respond to the location of the collision. The Safety Captain will determine what type of investigation will be conducted. Police Department notification may be waived in those instances on City property where there is no injury and only minor damage.
- B. The driver and supervisor shall complete a City Vehicle Accident Report and take photos of City vehicle or property damage; and, personal vehicle, or citizen vehicle/property damage. These shall be forwarded to the Battalion Chief or Supervisor within 24 hours of the accident. The accident report and photos shall then be forwarded to the Safety Officer within 24 hours. Accident reports will be promptly provided to City of Mesa Safety Services, the City Attorney's Office and Fire Resource Management by the Safety Section Captain .
- C. As soon as possible after the collision, the supervisor of the vehicle shall see that it is taken to Fire Resource Management during the regular business hours, Monday through Friday, for an estimate and additional photos of the damage.
- D. If the vehicle cannot be driven, the City vehicle shall be towed by the City contract towing company to Fire Resource Management at the East Mesa Service Center 6935 E. Decatur St. Damaged fire apparatus must have the damage estimated by Fire Resource Management.
- E. Based on the dollar amount of damage and the value of the vehicle, Resource Management will determine whether to repair the vehicle or retire it. If the vehicle is to be repaired, Resource Management will determine whether to keep the vehicle out of service to make the repairs or return the vehicle to service and make repairs during the next scheduled preventative maintenance.
- F. The Safety Section will maintain a collision file for all incidents containing the police report, the repair estimates, photos, and work order information.



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Leave of Absence

A CERT volunteer may request a Leave of Absence (LOA) after they have successfully completed six (6) months with the program. The period for an LOA will be capped at nine (9) months. There will be some circumstances where this could be waived (ex – military service). While on a LOA, the volunteer is responsible for attending and completing any mandatory training that is required for the CERT program or any requirements for being a volunteer with the City of Mesa.

Documentation and Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action shall be taken based upon the number of incidents or the severity/type of an incident occurring within a three-year period (beginning with the first occurrence) as follows:

- A. Supervisory Cuff Note and training, as necessary, from immediate supervisor for first preventable incident, if there is no violation of MFD Policy or traffic law *.
- B. Written Counseling or Corrective Action Plan to be determined by the immediate supervisor for the second preventable incident, if there is no violation of MFD Policy or traffic law.
- C. Oral Reprimand from immediate supervisor, with counseling/training** for the third preventable incident or the first incident of a violation of MFD Policy or traffic law.
- D. Written Reprimand for the fourth preventable incident or second incident of a violation of MFD Policy or traffic law.
- E. Termination for the fifth preventable incident or for a third incident of a violation of MFD Policy or traffic law.

* All members involved in preventable accidents, in sedans and pick-up trucks, shall attend the City mandated Driving Course.

** Member training to correct/improve behavior shall be documented, with copy to Personnel and Safety Deputy Chief for accident file.

The Personnel and Safety Section maintains collision records and will send the immediate supervisor an E-mail providing preventable collision information. A supervisor may contact the Personnel and Safety Section to determine if a member has been at fault in a vehicle collision during the last three years.

The individual CERT volunteer is responsible for paying for any tickets issued.

CERT Coordinator may terminate a volunteer at any time at his/her discretion based on vehicle collision and property damage circumstances. All cases judged individually.



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Seat Belt Use

The use of seat belts is required in any and all vehicles when a member is "on-duty". Seat belts are required at all times by all members and passengers when traveling in City vehicles.

When a personal vehicle is used for City business, it is the member's responsibility to ensure that all seat belts are functional and in good order.

City vehicles that are missing seat belts or lack adequate seat belts shall be reported to Resource Management and shall be repaired as soon as possible to ensure continued protection of users. Preventative maintenance inspections will be made of all seat belts in each City vehicle during its regularly scheduled inspection.

Staff Vehicles:

All drivers and passengers riding in City staff vehicles are required to wear seat belts at all times. It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that all passengers are seated and belted prior to moving the vehicle.

Patient Transport Vehicles

When traveling in patient transport vehicles, all passengers and patients will travel in designated passenger locations and be securely belted. When doing a transport it is the CERT volunteer's responsibility to require all customers to be securely seat belted prior to moving the vehicle. All children under 5 years old must be transported in a child safety seat. CERT volunteers must request the assistance of the MFD Connectors or CERT Coordinator if there is a need for a child transport.

Injuries & Exposures

Any CERT volunteers who are injured or exposed to dangerous materials should immediately assess the need for emergency medical services and request, if needed, assistance from the appropriate agency. The CERT volunteer should then report the incident to a CERT Coordinator.

Staff Vehicle Operations

Vehicles must be driven in conformance with existing traffic laws of the appropriate local jurisdiction.

Staff vehicles must be kept in a clean, presentable condition. It is recommended that staff vehicles be washed and cleaned on a weekly basis. The assigned driver of a vehicle is responsible for checking oil, tire pressure, and general overall condition of the vehicle. If service is needed, driver should contact Resource Management.

Vehicles will be used FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY. Stopping to eat lunch, dinner, etc., is authorized when an individual is at work in the field. Under NO circumstances will any individual operate a department vehicle while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Vehicle Break Downs: Anyone experiencing a vehicle break down while out of the city shall contact Resource Management during weekdays. After duty hours, the on-duty mechanic can be paged by Mesa Alarm or a Battalion Chief.



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Customer Services Sector

The Customer Services Sector shall be established by the Incident Commander at all working structure fires, and as early in the incident as is practical. The Customer Services Sector should also be established at any other incident where the need is identified; Fire, EMS, Special Operations, etc.

The Customer Services Sector is a critical extension of our service delivery, and serves as the liaison between the Fire Department and those citizens (responsible parties) directly or perhaps indirectly involved in or affected by the incident.

If necessary, Command will request additional resources in order to establish the Customer Service Sector. An additional Engine, Ladder, or Battalion Chief is acceptable. If necessary, at prolonged incidents, in order to return fire companies and personnel to service, Command may assign staff personnel to this function. The Customer Services Sector responsibilities may extend beyond the termination of the incident. Typically, Connectors are assigned this duty. On a large scale event, CERT volunteers may be requested by command to assist Connectors or fire personnel with the Customer Service Sector

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Customer Services Sector should consider offering the following services to the Customer/responsible parties. It should be noted that other Customer service needs may be identified and should be addressed as part of the Department's customer service goals.

- Carry out responsibilities under supervision of Loss Control Officer.
- Explain what happened, what we are doing and why, how long we expect to take until the incident is under control.
- Obtain from customer/responsible party, any significant information regarding the structure and/or its contents that might assist Command tactically with the operation. Inform Command of this information.
- Provide cellular telephone access (only if the volunteer has a city issued cell phone – volunteers are not to offer their personal cell phones).
- Communicate the location to which evacuees have been sent. (Notify the Investigations Sector of this location also when passing on this information.)
- Identify any mental health needs of customers/responsible parties, as well as any spectators or evacuees. (i.e., affects of shootings, mass casualty, highly visible critical rescue, etc).
- Assist Connectors or fire personnel with notifying Red Cross, Salvation Army, or other relief agencies.
- Notify other necessary agencies and/or individuals if needed.
- Provide coordination of salvage efforts with the loss control officer.
- Where safe to do so, and after approval from Investigations Sector, coordinate a "walk-through" of the structure with the responsible party. **Volunteers are not allowed in the structure that was on fire.** If a walk-through is requested, the volunteer can ask a firefighter to attend to the customer on the walk-through.
- Determine the location of valuables in the structure and notify Command/Loss Control officer.



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- Handout and explain the "After the Fire" brochure.
- Assist the Customer in notifying insurance agents, security services, restoration companies, etc.
- Provide blankets, and a shelter, where practical to do so, (i.e. neighbor's house, etc.) To get customers out of the weather and at a single location.
- Provide on-going service and support until the customer indicates our services are no longer needed.

The Customer Services Sector shall report to Command unless a Loss Control Branch/Section is assigned, at which time he/she shall report to the Loss Control Officer.

AMERICAN RED CROSS SERVICES

For residential fires where the customer has suffered a loss of living quarters and clothing, the American Red Cross may be used to provide support. The American Red Cross can provide some clothing, food, toiletries, and arrange for temporary shelter/housing for the customers. When contacting the Red Cross, provide the following information:

- Address of the incident.
- Address where victims can be contacted.
- Phone number of contact location.
- Number of displaced persons with information on age, sex, etc.

Certifications

All CERT volunteers must remain CPR certified at the level of CPR/AED. CPR classes are offered periodically through MFD. It is the volunteer's responsibility to remain certified continuously.



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Confidentiality

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 and its relevance to the Mesa Fire Department.

SCOPE

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) rules cover all health information, regardless of form, including electronic records, paper records, and oral communication. HIPAA rules also provide healthcare consumers with control over their health information, set boundaries on medical record use and release, ensure the security of personal health information, and establish accountability for medical record use and release.

- Ensuring that appropriate safeguards exist to protect health information
- Individuals who violate the privacy rules will face criminal and civil penalties. For example, violators who unintentionally disclose information will face civil fines of \$100 per violation, up to a total of \$25,000 per year. Violators who intentionally release health information for personal gain face criminal sanctions punishable by up to \$250,000 and 10 years in prison.

POLICY STATEMENT

Given the nature of our work, it is imperative that we maintain the confidentiality of patient information that we receive in the course of our work. Mesa Fire Department prohibits the release of any patient information to anyone outside the organization unless required for purposes of treatment, payment, or healthcare operations and discussions of Protected Health Information (PHI) within the organization should be limited.

Mesa Fire Department provides services to patients that are private and confidential. Each member is a crucial step in respecting the privacy rights of Mesa Fire Department's patients. It is necessary, in the rendering of Mesa Fire Department services, that patients provide personal information. This information may exist in a variety of forms such as electronic, oral, written, or photographic material. All such information is strictly confidential and protected by federal and state laws.

Mesa Fire Department members must comply with all confidentiality policies and procedures set in place by the Department during their employment or association with Mesa Fire Department. If a member knowingly or inadvertently breaches patient confidentiality policies and procedures at any time, the member must immediately notify the EMS Privacy Officer of Mesa Fire Department. A breach of patient confidentiality may result in disciplinary action. At any time upon request, members must return any and all patient confidential information in their possession.

STANDARD

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 set the standard for this policy.



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Staffing Expectations at Special Events

One goal that the Mesa Fire Department has for the CERT program is to have at least two CERT volunteers promote community awareness of potential hazards and preparedness measures at all scheduled special events. Examples of Mesa Fire special events are; councilmember pancake breakfasts, toy drives, food drives, hydration drives, building stronger neighborhoods, airport open houses, City facility grand openings (ie., Fire Stations), Getting Arizona Involved in Neighborhoods (GAIN) events, major holiday events, etc. The role of a CERT volunteer at these special events will be to represent the Mesa Fire Department and educate the general public about CERT and disaster preparedness. Having a presence at these events give the community a chance to learn more and understand what the fire department has to offer. Another type of special event would be presentation of disaster preparedness to local community groups. CERT volunteers are the ideal persons to present this information. CERT volunteers are encouraged to act as victims in training exercises

CERT Volunteer Expectations

CERT Volunteers Will:

- commit to the one year requirement
- volunteer a minimum of 20 hours per year
- attend at least two out of four (or half of) optional Continuing Education trainings (CE's)
- attend any *mandatory* trainings
- maintain the CPR level of CPR & AED
- arrive no later than 15 minutes before your scheduled event start time
- not perform firefighting skills (even if trained)
- not perform EMT/medical skills (even if certified as an EMT or higher level)
- not push cars
- not direct traffic
- report all volunteer/response hours to the CERT Coordinator
- be responsible for the regular maintenance and care of their CERT bag
- work in teams at special events and incident response (teams of atleast two CERT volunteers
- Wear all proper safety clothing/equipment appropriate for scene/disaster. This includes closed toe shoes
- Always pair up and work with a "buddy" or another Mesa Fire volunteer
- Never "self-deploy"; only go where and when assigned by proper authority
- Take the proper precautions to protect yourself from fluids for example: gloves, goggles, and/or face mask.

CERT volunteers are considered "Good Samaritans" and covered under the Volunteer Protection Act. CERT volunteers do not have any authority beyond serving as "Good Samaritan" when helping others.

CERT volunteers can complement and enhance first-response capability in neighborhoods and workplaces by ensuring the safety of themselves and their families working outward to the neighborhood or office and beyond until first responders arrive. CERTs can then assist first-response personnel as directed.



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Unstaffed Shifts/ No Show Policy

If an event is unstaffed (only one CERT volunteer), follow the CERT no show policy:

1. Contact the volunteer once they are 5 minutes late for their event (phone list is provided to all CERT volunteers)
2. Contact the CERT Coordinator by cell phone to inform them of the situation
3. Start contacting other volunteers to see if they can help fill in the shift (refer to phone list)
4. At no time do you respond to events by yourself. You may respond with volunteer from a different MFD volunteer program (Connector, CRT, Special Event Volunteer)

If a CERT volunteer is late due to unavoidable circumstances, it is their responsibility to contact their partner to inform them of the situation. If you know that you will be late or not able to make your commitment with 24 hour notice, or you cannot reach the other scheduled team member, contact the Coordinator on their cell.

Contaminated Items

CERT members do not handle or transport any contaminated items. Any piece of medical equipment or other item that comes in contact with a patient's bodily fluid is considered contaminated. If asked to do so, CERT members must decline.

CERT members are strongly suggested to remain current on all immunizations.

Ride Along Policy

Volunteers with the Mesa Fire Department are allowed unlimited ride-alongs per calendar year at the discretion of the CERT Coordinator. All requests must be submitted in writing (email or hard copy is fine). Ride-along request forms are available through the CERT Coordinator.

Requests must include the station location you'd like and the beginning and end times, as well as 2 date options at least 2 weeks from the date you're submitting the request. Ride-alongs are available between 7am to 8pm. There are no exceptions.

If you must cancel your ride-along, you must inform the CERT Coordinator with as much notice as possible. If you are canceling the day of the ride, contact the station directly.

Mutual Aid Calls

The Mesa Fire Department CERT program is designed to only respond to incidents within the City of Mesa. If a CERT member is requested to respond outside of the City, the CERT member must verify and gain approval by a CERT Coordinator.