



# BROOKLINE POLICE DEPARTMENT

*Brookline Massachusetts*

Mark P. Morgan  
Superintendent  
Acting Chief of Police

## Brookline Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

### OVERVIEW

The Brookline CERT was established in 2004, under the guidelines set forth by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which was in direct response to the events of 9/11/2001. Since its inception, CERT has trained hundreds of volunteers in disaster recovery and emergency preparedness. Currently, there are over 225 members in Brookline's CERT. The Brookline Police Department is the oversight agency for the Brookline CERT and two Brookline police officers serve as co-coordinators of the program. CERT is a critical program in the Town's ongoing efforts to engage residents in making our community safer, more prepared, and more resilient when incidents occur. The Brookline CERT has been institutionalized into emergency response procedures in Brookline and are called upon by the Brookline Police Department, the Brookline Fire Department, the Brookline Department of Public Works, the Brookline Health Department, the Town's Emergency Management Team and various other Town and community partners to provide a vast array of support services.

Brookline CERT volunteers are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to respond to any and all emergency situations as they arise. At a moment's notice, CERT volunteers mobilize to the scene of the incident and provide critical assistance towards lower priority tasks so that emergency personnel/first responders can focus on the more serious tasks.

The two Brookline police officers who serve as co-coordinators of the program are Sgt. Casey Hatchett and Officer Nicholas Goon.

### CERT Training and Recruitment

Training for new CERT volunteers meets the Five FEMA Mission areas of prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery. Prevention: CERT volunteers are trained in various aspects of prevention as it relates to emergency situations they may face in their day to day environments and also trained in situational awareness which will allow them to assist in early detection as our eyes throughout the community of possible risks. Mitigation: CERT volunteers are trained to assist during emergencies through light search and rescue, fire safety, first aid, mass care and traffic direction to help lessen the impact of the disaster. Response: CERT volunteers assist in meeting basic human needs of those affected by a disaster or critical incident such as sheltering, food and first aid. Recovery: CERT volunteers assist in recovery efforts community-wide by assisting with registration for assistance, restoring people to their homes, assisting with mass vaccination, providing community education and assisting various social service agencies in Town in achieving their mission.



This CERT program also supports the FEMA Core Capabilities of: mass care services, public information, mass search and rescue operations, and community resiliency.

The CERT training is generally offered yearly in the winter. It lasts ten weeks and at the end of the training, volunteers receive certification and training in numerous emergency preparedness and disaster recovery topics. Some of the topics taught to volunteers over the course of ten weeks include: Surviving an Active Threat/Situational Awareness, Disaster/Emergency Preparedness, Search and Rescue Operations, CPR & AED, First Aid, Disaster Medical Operations, Traffic Direction, Fire Suppression, Mass Care and Shelter Operations. CERT volunteers are introduced to many aspects of local emergency management and first responder responsibilities.

### **Continuing Education**

In addition to the full ten week training program for new volunteers, Brookline CERT hosts numerous opportunities for continuing education/specialized training each year, often in conjunction with the Brookline Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) program. The program also provides educational talks to community members on emergency preparedness. Our outreach efforts focus on residents and service providers who work with children, diverse communities and those with access and functional needs.

Additionally, in response to the increase in active shooter incidents and other mass causality incidents we have seen, we are looking to add “Stop the Bleed” and “You are the help until help arrives” training to our basic CERT curriculum and to our on-going educational training programs for current CERT and MRC members. Both CERT coordinators were recently certified as Stop the Bleed instructors and, working in conjunction with Fallon Ambulance, we will start training town staff, CERT and MRC members and the community about the life saving benefits and proper use of tourniquets. The use of tourniquets has been proven to save lives. Additionally, we will enhance our preparedness/situational awareness trainings to include extensive training for civilian response to active shooters.

The demands we put on our volunteers are constantly evolving and therefore the training provided to them must keep pace. Additionally, as we experience exceptional emergencies in our region like the Marathon bombing, major storms and various active shooters/threats in public areas, it is also critical that we continue and expand our efforts to educate our community on how to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk.

### **CERT Activations**

The Brookline CERT activates many times each year for a vast array of emergency and support situations. In 2013, the Brookline CERT activated following the Boston Marathon Bombing to open a shelter for runners who were stranded in Brookline. They also activated for a missing person’s search in which the missing party was located but was deceased. CERT volunteers have been activated to support the Police and Fire Departments with assisting victims of house fires, destructive weather incidents and even washed water fowl (ducks) following an oil leak in the Muddy River. They support the annual flu clinics, staff tables at community events sharing information on emergency preparedness, and assisted with traffic at many Brookline Bikes Beacon and other community events. The Brookline CERT program has been called upon to support shelters during ice and snow storms in Middlesex County and the Cape, the tornado shelters in Western MA and flooding incidents on the north and south shores. They have



been called upon to assist with shelters for fire victims in other communities. Regardless of when or where, our Brookline CERTs step up and help out where they are needed.

### **CERT Service During the Pandemic**

The Brookline CERT volunteers have been an integral part of the Town's response to COVID Pandemic. From assisting with supply inventory and EOC logistics, to working the COVID anti-body and vaccine clinics, to distributing flyers and educational print material to ensuring residents were kept informed about the emerging mandates, the CERT volunteers have been heavily relied upon during this difficult time. Early on in COVID, our volunteers were connected to social service agencies and Town agencies to assist with increased needs in Brookline, such as volunteer needs at the Brookline Food Pantry, assisting elders through the Brookline Preparedness Buddies, working the summer heat cooling centers, making calls through the Friendly Caller program and helping manage crowds and traffic flow at the BHS graduation, the Farmer's Market and Town Elections.

\*\*\* For more information about the CERT Program, please email: [ngoona@brooklinema.gov](mailto:ngoona@brooklinema.gov)

