



Volunteer opportunities, positions and related training courses

## NERT Volunteer Guide



# NERT Volunteer Overview

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## **NERT Members:**

- Are trained by the San Francisco Fire Department in basic disaster organizational and response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, disaster medical operations, and Incident Command System
- May use the training learned in the classroom and during exercises to assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help
- Assist the SFFD during response in a declared emergency or at the request of the SFFD
- Provide communications to the SFFD in times of emergency and non-emergency
- Are registered in the State Disaster Service Worker Volunteer Program which provides insurance when they are responding according to the Supervising agency (SFFD) established guidelines and within the scope of their training
- Are a key piece in the City and County of San Francisco (CCSF) Disaster plan
- Are a force multiplier in response, providing aid to their neighbors and situational awareness to the SFFD improving the effectiveness of the overall response
- Are taught an understanding of chain of command and the importance of taking direction, allowing NERTs to assist in other tasks as needed with proper just-in-time training and supervision.
- Take an active role in promoting emergency safety for all community members to be prepared to care for their families and themselves
- Maintain current status, retraining every two years
- Adhere to NERT Code of Conduct

## **NERT Members Do Not:**

- Suppress large fires
- Enter heavily damaged or dangerous structures
- Perform hazardous material cleanup or respond to biological, chemical or radiological hazards
- Perform fire, search and rescue, medical operations, or law enforcement activities beyond their training
- Activate or deploy unless directed to do so by the NERT program manager or according to the self-activation guidelines in a declared emergency
- Replace professional first responders

## **NERT Program Roles: Non-Emergency**

- Advisory Board<sup>1</sup>
- Committees<sup>1</sup>
- Outreach and Community Preparedness: this includes tabling at events and businesses or other organizations to inform people about preparedness and NERT training.

## **Neighborhood Team Roles: Non-Emergency**

- Coordinator<sup>2</sup>
- Co-Coordinator<sup>2</sup>
- Communication
- Block Captain
- Active team participant

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<sup>1</sup> These positions are specialized. Members are selected on an as needed basis. Appointments are made after an interview and with the approval of the NERT Program Coordinator and Advisory Board members. Committees are formed Ad hoc

<sup>2</sup> NERT members interested in volunteering as neighborhood coordinator or co-coordinator should submit an email request to [sffdnerf@sfgov.org](mailto:sffdnerf@sfgov.org) so that an interview can be scheduled.

## Neighborhood Team Responder Roles: Emergency

- ICS
- Communications
- Field Team
  - Damage Assessment
  - Triage & Treatment
  - Search & Rescue
  - Fire Suppression
  - Utility Control
  - Evacuation
- Neighborhood Assistant
  - Block Captain
  - Information leader
  - Comfort & Care provider

## Disaster Corps Volunteer

NERT received a grant in 2011 and selected volunteers were trained, background checked and credentialed to provide mutual aid Statewide. This project will continue as funds become available to conduct background checks and training.

## Medical Reserve Corps

The responsibilities of MRC volunteers vary, depending on the nature of the needs in the community. MRC volunteers can assist during emergencies and assist with public initiatives and ongoing community health outreach and education efforts before an emergency. MRC may assist locally or may be requested to deploy. A partnership with San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) and the State Disaster Healthcare Volunteer (DHV) network allows us to further our skills and opportunities in such areas as vaccine assistance and point of dispensing.

- EMT's, Paramedics and other First Responders
- Fire Service Volunteers and Fire Academy students
- Community members without medical training who can assist with administrative and other essential support functions
- Licensed medical professionals, such as doctors, nurses, pharmacists, nurses' assistants, and others.

## Water Supply Support: Partner with SFPUC

After a disaster, the SFPUC has a primary responsibility to restore their water system as needed and provide water supply for firefighting operations. In certain instances, they may be involved in supporting the City's efforts to distribute potable water.

- Portable Water Supply System (PWSS) set up support for Firefighting operations
- Drinking/Sanitation supply and distribution

## **Auxiliary Law Enforcement Response Team (ALERT): Partner with SFPD**

ALERT volunteers are NERT volunteers who have received training by the SFPD to assist PD in essential tasks after a major disaster.

In response, members of ALERT shall deploy to one of two dedicated staging locations at their discretion: Taraval Station Community Room (West of Twin Peaks) or Special Operations Bureau Headquarters (East of Twin Peaks) for assignment.

## **Emergency Volunteer Center Support**

In a disaster, many spontaneous volunteers that are not affiliated with any agency rush to the impacted area to help. In order to use their assistance, an intake center must be established to check qualifications, register volunteers and match them to volunteer opportunities. While NERT volunteers do not currently assist with this important disaster role, the role & training is under development.



# NERT Position Description: Non-Emergency Program Assistance

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## **NERT Program Assistance: Non-Emergency**

- Advisory Board<sup>3</sup>
- Committees<sup>3</sup>
  - Training
  - Media
- Outreach and Community Preparedness: this includes tabling at events and businesses or other organizations to inform people about preparedness and NERT training.

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<sup>3</sup> These positions are specialized. Members are selected on an as needed basis. Appointments are made after an interview and with the approval of the NERT Program Coordinator and Advisory Board members.





# NERT Position Description: Non-emergency Neighborhood Team Volunteer

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## Neighborhood Team: Non-Emergency

### Coordinator<sup>4</sup>

The goal of the NERT program is to get every San Francisco resident prepared for a disaster. The job of the Neighborhood Coordinator is to help achieve that goal working in his/her neighborhood.

- Act as a contact person for NERT members in your neighborhood.
- Maintain current list of NERT graduates in your area<sup>5</sup> and provide updates to the Program Office.
- Provide NERT graduates in your neighborhood with information updates from the Program Office.
- Organize team meetings and activities, seeking assistance from team members in planning and carrying out activities.<sup>6</sup>
- Participate in San Francisco NERT drills, advanced training classes, and other events as time permits, and encourage team members to join you.
- Attend quarterly leadership meetings or send a representative.
- Encourage non-NERT neighbors to take NERT training.
- Help set up and staff the NERT staging area in your neighborhood after a catastrophic incident, if you are safe and able to do so.

### Co-Coordinator<sup>4</sup>

- Assist Coordinator with all items listed above.
- Act as representative for the Coordinator as needed.

### Communications

- Assist coordinator with maintenance of graduate list<sup>5</sup>.
- Assist with providing information updates to NERT graduates on your team.

### Block Captain

- Gathers and stores information from each household on the assigned block, using Household Survey Forms. This includes:
  - names of people in the household
  - people with special needs
  - people with special skills; e.g. NERT or first-aid training, bilingual
  - people who have special equipment; e.g. generators, chain saws, heavy jacks, hand tools
  - Distribute HELP/OK signs

### Active Team Member

A Neighborhood team is most successful when graduates of the NERT training plan, practice and play with each other. A team member participates in neighborhood activities.

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<sup>4</sup> NERT members interested in volunteering as neighborhood coordinator or co-coordinator should submit an email request to [Erica.arteseros@sfgov.org](mailto:Erica.arteseros@sfgov.org) so that an interview can be scheduled.

<sup>5</sup> Use of NERT database/member information is for NERT activities only. Team Coordinators and team Communication assistants may receive the database only after completing the Confidentiality Statement with the Program Coordinator.

<sup>6</sup> Refer to the Coordinators Toolkit and Coordinators Guidelines for guidance and assistance.



# NERT Position Description: Emergency Responder Overview

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## NERT Responder – Emergency

### All NERT Responders

#### Before the Disaster

The primary responsibility of NERTs before the disaster occurs is to be ready to respond. Before the disaster:

- Be sure you have your NERT ID card and it is current. NOTE: All NERTs must recertify every two years.
- Complete additional training to prepare for assuming any of the roles described here.
- Participate in NERT program or neighborhood activities to become more familiar with other NERTs in your area and become familiar with hazards and resources in the neighborhood.
- It takes the collective effort of NERT graduates in a neighborhood to plan meetings and activities.
- Learn about communications methods in NERT response.
- Participate in neighborhood and citywide practice drills.
- Keep a “Go-Kit” prepared for the post-disaster block assessment. At least, this should include:
  - Protective gear: sturdy shoes, pants, long-sleeved shirt; hardhat, work gloves, vest
  - Other personal protective equipment: goggles, masks; weatherproof clothing
  - Personal First Aid Kit
  - Whistle
  - Flashlight and batteries
  - Caution tape
  - A clipboard
  - Pens, pencils, note pads, duct or painters tape
  - Damage Assessment Form and Damage Assessment Form Usage Instructions (PDF)
- Depending upon your skills and training, you might also include:
  - [Triage Guides: Triage Guide small version (PDF) | Triage Guide large version (PDF)]
  - Any tools that might help you perform response duties – crescent wrench, fire extinguisher

### All NERT Responders

#### After the Disaster: Call-up response

The Program Coordinator or their designee will send an email & text alert when activation is needed in a *less than catastrophic* event. Please make sure that your phone and email are updated at the office and in Regroup

#### After the disaster: Self-Activation response

In a major event, self-activate to the pre-designated NERT staging areas to establish the Staging Area Command Center per the guideline for NERT response.

### All NERT Responders

- Make sure you, your family, and your home are safe.

- Start damage assessment on your block.
- After the damage assessment is complete, go to the Staging Area to check in and become part of the response, as a member of the Command Staff or on a Field Team.
  - While heading to the Staging Area, exercise extreme caution at all times. Keep safe by practicing safety awareness and staying within your scope of training and your assigned role when aiding others and addressing hazards.
  - On the way, continue to note serious damage or hazards you observe, noting them on the Damage Assessment Form.
  - When you encounter people who need help, you must assess whether you have the resources/ability to do so, or whether they can be better served by you reaching the Staging Area to report your findings and get assistance.
  - You will be assigned a role based upon your capabilities and the team's response needs.
- Remember that you are a volunteer and are responsible for looking after your own needs as well as others. If at any time you wish to stop because of physical limitations, emotional reasons, other duties, or any other personal reason, you may do so. **However, you must notify your team leader and Logistics to check out.** If you do not officially check out, it will cause the Staging Area to send a rescue team to find you.

# NERT Position Description: Staging Area Command Post Overview

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## Staging Area Command Post

The NERT Staging Area Command Post is the central point for command and control of incidents. The Staging Area Command Post objectives include:

- Providing leadership and structure to the team response
- Identifying the scope of the incident
- Determining an overall strategy
- Deploying teams and resources
- Communicating neighborhood needs and overall status to the assigned SFFD Battalion Station
- Relaying updated and helpful information to area residents
- Documenting actions and results

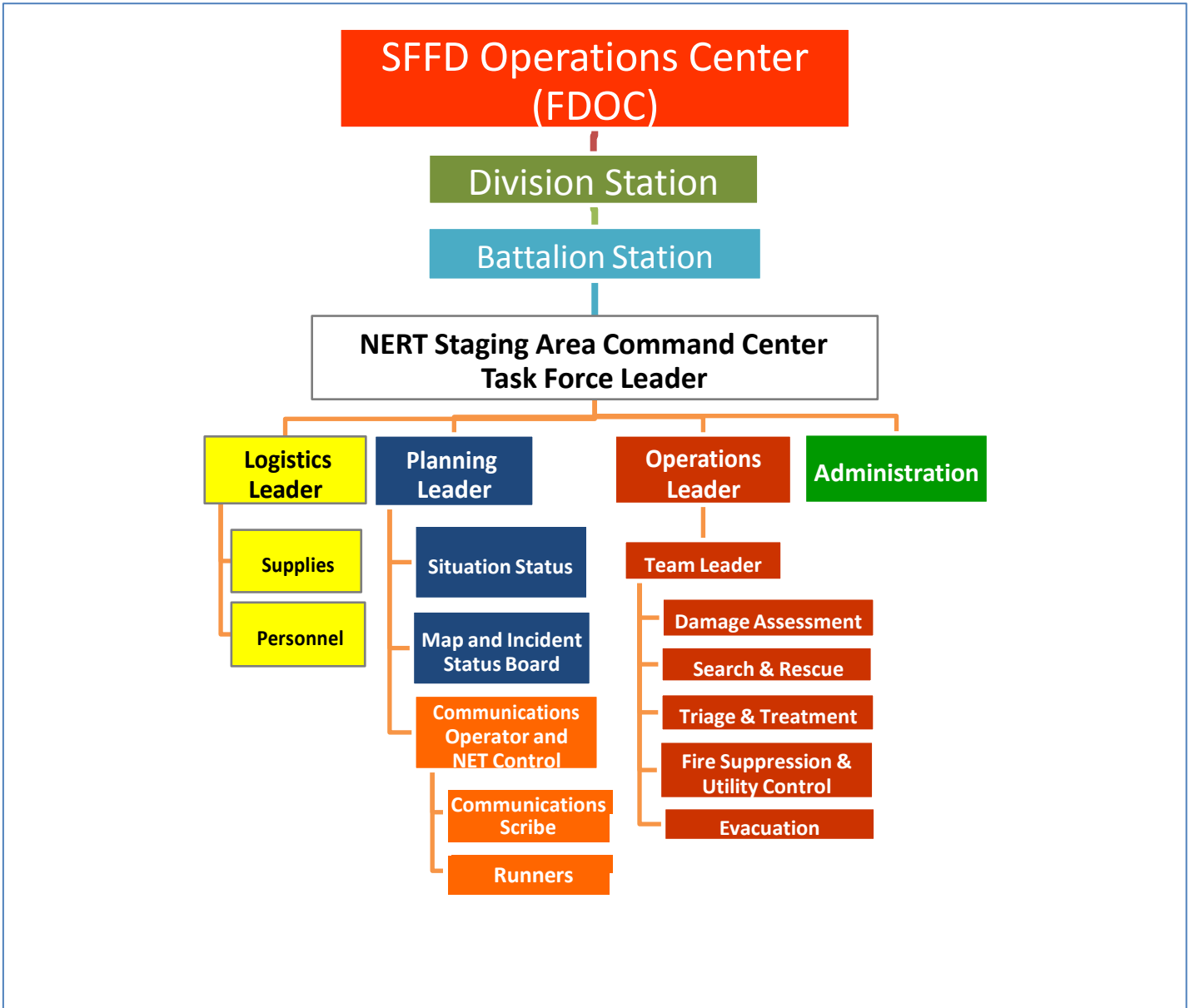
NERT volunteers must establish Incident Command System (ICS) at the Staging Area Command Post to respond to the emergency.

## ICS System

The Incident Command System (ICS) is the system used by first responder agencies to manage emergency operations. When a Neighborhood Emergency Response Team (NERT) is activated for their neighborhood or workplace, they become part of that system. Here is how the SFFD NERT organization interrelates with the ICS:

- SFFD's ICS operates from the Fire Department Operations Center (FDOC) at the Fire Department Administrative headquarters located at 698 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. In a disaster situation, the department decentralizes operations and the nine Battalion areas report to their assigned two Division Chiefs. The Division Chiefs report to the FDOC. The NERT teams become Task Forces of their assigned Battalion Station.
- The NERT Staging Area Task Force Leader (TFL) initially reports in by communicating with the assigned Battalion via ham radio through the Auxiliary Communications Service (ACS) Net Control operator or via a runner.

This chart shows how the NERT Staging Area Command Post connects to the SFFD Incident Command System and then develops its own command structure.



# NERT Position Description: Staging Area Command Leaders

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## **ICS Command Roles**

This is an overview of the ICS leaders. A leader will be most effective when they fill support roles listed in the Staging Area Command Post Support Volunteers document. All leaders maintain a Unit/Activity Log (ICS Form 214)

### ***Task Force Leader***

The Neighborhood Coordinator is the designated Task Force Leader (TFL). However, during activation for a disaster, the first person to arrive at the Staging Area is the temporary TFL until the designated or a more qualified person arrives. The TFL stays at the command post throughout post-disaster activities. If the TFL has to leave, the position must be delegated to another qualified volunteer.

The TFL assumes the overall responsibility to accumulate, organize, and prioritize emergency information; assign teams to assist victims and mitigate hazards; communicate critical needs to the assigned Battalion Station; and relay updated and helpful information to area residents.

## ***Section Leaders***

### **Planning Leader**

The Planning Leader is responsible for receiving incident information, evaluating incidents, assigning incidents to Operations to dispatch Field teams, and updating the TFL. The Planning Leader sees that a team response plan is drafted and prepares information for briefings. The Planning Leader will function as the Operations Leader, coordinating the Operations Teams, if the Staging Area Command Post is short volunteers or until a separate Operations Leader is identified.

### **Operations Leader**

The Operations Leader assigns, directs and monitors the Field Teams based on information and directions received from the Planning Section.

### **Logistics Leader**

The Logistics Leaders provides facilities, services, and materials & supplies in support of the incident and coordinate and process requests for additional resources. This includes items for both the Staging Area and Field teams. In NERT, the Logistics section also tracks personnel, checking in NERT volunteers as they arrive in the Staging Area and tracking as they are assigned.

Spontaneous volunteers that have been registered through the SF Department of Human Resources (DHR) system can report in to Logistics and then might be used in team response when paired with a NERT volunteer.

### **Administration Leader**

The Administration Leader compiles all records of NERT team activities during the response, including any receipts from team expenses or donations, collecting them periodically throughout the response and checking them for legibility and completeness. Administration organizes all documents at the conclusion of the response and brings them to designated SFFD personnel.





# NERT Position Description: Staging Area Command Post Support

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## *Scribe*

Sections leaders must give their attention to managing the Staging Area operations and team response. As information and volunteers come into the Staging Area, they will need assistance. Scribes can assist. Scribes must be able to print clearly and legibly and understand the responsibilities and processes of the section to which they are assigned. Sections Leaders may request several scribes based on the activity in the section.

### **Communications Scribe**

The Scribe works with the Operator or Net Control to help record information from incoming calls onto the Communications Log or a Message Form and distribute that information appropriately.

### **Planning Scribe**

The Scribe works with the Planning Leader to record information from residents, NERT teams and Damage Assessment Forms onto the Incident Status Form to create the Situation Status record, and Incident Tracking Card or a Message Form as appropriate and distribute that information appropriately.

### **Map and Status Board Scribe**

The Map and Status Board Scribe posts information from the Incident Status Record on one or more maps of the neighborhood and the Status Board and assists the Planning Leader in and tracking resolution of incidents.

### **Operations Scribe**

The Scribe works with the Operations leader recording the assignment, dispatch and return of Field Teams and updating incident information received as Field teams call in via radio or return to the Staging Area.

### **Logistics Scribe**

The Scribe works with the Logistics Resource manager to track people and resources

## *Safety Officer*

The Safety reports to and supports the NERT TFL. The Safety function is to develop and recommend measures for assuring personnel safety, and to monitor and anticipate hazardous situations. Safety has authority to stop and prevent unsafe acts. Document any safe and unsafe acts, accidents and corrective actions and suggestions for improvement.

## *Public Information Officer (PIO)*

The Public Information Officer works for and reports to the NERT TFL. The PIO maintains current information summaries and/or displays on the incident. Work with the TFL to determine if you will speak to the media. Prepare information to provide to the Neighborhood residents.

## *Staging Area Manager*

The Staging Area Manager works for and reports to Operations. Staging establishes layout and sets up staging area. They are also in charge of demobilizing staging.

## *Resource Manager*

The Resource Manager works in Logistics tracking all personnel and recording their assignments.



# NERT Position Description: Communications

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## **Communications**

The Logistics section is responsible for providing communications, but the Communications operator is often placed in the Planning Section to more easily facilitate the passing of information from the section responsible for tracking all information, sending relevant information to the assigned Battalion Station and maintaining the situation status. At the Battalion station, a system will be established to pass messages to the Battalion Chief (BC). Messages that arrive by any means below are passed to the BC using the same method established.

### ***Ham Radio***

Amateur (ham) radio is used to communicate from the Staging Area to the assigned Battalion Station on pre-determined frequencies. Field Teams and Block Captains may use ham radios, FRS, or GMRS radios to communicate with the Staging Area using the pre-determined tactical frequencies. Only FCC-licensed hams can legally operate the ham radio and only NERT Communications Team (NCT) members (FCC-licensed hams registered DSWs with the SFFD) are legally allowed to be in radio contact with the Battalion.

### **Field Team Operator**

Field teams may communicate with the Staging Area using the ham radio assigned tactical channel. Teams may also choose to use FRS or GMRS radios for this purpose.

### **NET Control Operator**

The Net Control is the central node of communications in the Staging Area. Ham and FRS/GMRS operation may be split if two qualified operators are available.

### **Packet Radio Station Operator**

Working within the NERT Communications plan, volunteers with the capability to set up a packet station may pass messages to the Battalion station using a ham radio signal and a laptop when there is packet operator at the Battalion.

### ***Twitter***

Twitter has proven to be an effective tool in emergency communications, allowing small messages to be passed in austere environments. Geolocation and photos can also be included. Twitter handles have been established for each Battalion. A skilled twitter operator will monitor twitter to receive messages.

### **Twitter Communications Operator**

The Twitter operators may be in communication with field teams and with the Battalion Twitter operator.

### **Twitter Search Operator**

Twitter is a valuable tool to gather situational awareness about emergencies in a geographic area. A search operator is another valuable tool to gather information for the NERT team to act or report to the BC.

### ***Runner***

If radio communication with the assigned Battalion Station is limited or not possible, written information must be brought to the Station by runners using any means available; e.g. if the roads are passable, the "runner" can drive or bike. Runners report to the Communications lead for assignment and instruction.



# NERT Position Description: Field Team Leader

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## Field Teams

All volunteers participating in NERT response activities share these responsibilities:

- Carry out the tasks assigned safely. Be aware of the safety of those you supervise and help.
- Understand the tasks you are asked to perform. Be aware of your abilities and available resources.
- Acquire the tools and materials needed.
- Organize and brief team members.
- Use and follow scene size-up before taking action.
- Always record actions taken and report to the team or section leader after completing your tasks.

## Field Team Leader

**Team Leaders** direct the team in completing assignments safely and successfully. The Team Leader reports to and receives direction from the Operations section, and then makes sure the team members understand the assignment, plan their response, solve problems, and work effectively with each other. While responding, the Team Leader may decide to direct the team to address an incident that is “on-viewed” providing the team has adequate resources, it is safe to do so, and it will not prevent them completing the original assignment.

The Team Leader should be an individual who has demonstrated through training, knowledge and experience that he/she is capable of leading the team before and during the stressful environment of a disaster. Team Leaders must be able to manage and seek advice from a diverse group. The Team Leader must possess knowledge of team functions, operations, and safety. Team functions:

- **Damage Assessment** - Damage assessment consists of three components, which happen sequentially: Big Picture, Quick, and Detailed Assessments. Generally, the Big Picture and Quick Assessments are conducted as quickly as possible after the disaster starts. The Detailed Assessment may be delayed, and is usually started under the direction of the Staging Area, after more urgent priorities have been addressed.
- **Search, Rescue & Extrication** - If a structure is known to contain injured people or there may be people inside a hazardous structure, a Search & Rescue team may be sent to find and assess (triage) the people. If a person is found trapped, the team may perform extrication using cribbing, or they may request a team to do so.
- **Triage & Treatment** - In a disaster, there are likely to be many people who have serious but not immediately life-threatening injuries. Their condition will need to be assessed and recorded. After performing triage, the team *may* set up a treatment area in a safe location and continues to treat victims and plan transport.
- **Fire Suppression & Utility Control** – A field team may be sent to investigate the smell of gas, or a confirmed gas leak. Only take action if it is safe to do so. Report all fires ASAP to the assigned Battalion Station.
- **Evacuation** - If a hazard is growing or spreading, a Field Team may be sent to evacuate people from specific surrounding areas or structures that may be threatened



# NERT Position Description: Block Captain

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## Block Captain

- Make sure you, your family, and your home are safe.
- Start your block assessment on your assigned block.
- After the damage assessment is complete, go to the Staging Area to check in and report your block status and your availability.
  - When you encounter people who need help, you must assess whether you have the resources/ability to do so, or whether they can be better served by you reaching the Staging Area to report your findings and get assistance.  
[Pre-planning with your block will allow you to assign other people on the block to provide assistance while you go to report the emergency needs.]
  - From the Staging Area, you could be assigned to assess another block, complete a more detailed block assessment, be part of a Field Team, or perform another volunteer task depending upon your capabilities and the team's response needs.





# NERT Position Description: Neighborhood Assistant

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## **Field Teams**

All volunteers participating in NERT response activities share these responsibilities:

- Carry out the tasks assigned safely. Be aware of the safety of those you supervise and help.
- Understand the tasks you are asked to perform. Be aware of your abilities and available resources.
- Acquire the tools and materials needed.
- Organize and brief team members.
- Use and follow scene size-up before acting.
- Always record actions taken and report to the team or section leader after completing your tasks.

## ***Neighborhood Assistant***

A neighborhood assistant is a NERT who may prefer to remain on their block, or who is willing to maintain a post within the NERT team's area to assist the community. They may do the following

- Notify neighbors of the location of the NERT team where they can request emergency assistance
- Provide information that they have learned through monitoring reliable City sources or Alerts.
- Provide supplies to the NERT team
- Provide comfort and care to neighbors



# NERT Position Description: Field Team Safety Officer

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## **Field Teams**

All volunteers participating in NERT response activities share these responsibilities:

- Carry out the tasks assigned safely. Be aware of the safety of those you supervise and help.
- Understand the tasks you are asked to perform. Be aware of your abilities and available resources.
- Acquire the tools and materials needed.
- Organize and brief team members.
- Use and follow scene size-up before taking action.
- Always record actions taken and report to the team or section leader after completing your tasks.

## ***Team Safety Officer***

**Team safety officers** report to and assist the Team Leader in accounting for all team members, and making sure the team takes safety precautions in transit and during response actions. Team Safety Officers must be able to step up to the Team Leader position if the Team Leader is not available.



# NERT Position Description: Team Member, Damage Assessment

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## Damage Assessment

All NERT members should perform Damage Assessment as they walk from their current location to the NERT Staging Area. This will help eliminate the number of teams that need to be sent out for assessment and preserve more NERT responders for other field response activities.

All volunteers participating in NERT response activities share these responsibilities:

- Carry out the tasks assigned safely. Be aware of the safety of those you supervise and help.
- Understand the tasks you are asked to perform. Be aware of your abilities and available resources.
- Acquire the tools and materials needed.
- Organize and brief team members.
- Use and follow scene size-up before taking action.
- Always record actions taken and report to the team or section leader after completing your tasks.

## Team Members

**Team members** report to the Team Leader and adhere to NERT principles, staying within the scope of their training to effectively respond to a situation. Team members work under the direction of the Team Leader as a cohesive team. They help plan and carry out all team functions. Every team member is responsible for the actions of their team.

## Team Assignments

When activated for an emergency response, the team assignments will follow the guidelines below. Every field team will have a Team Leader and a Safety Officer. Depending on the assignment, you will need additional field team members.

### Damage Assessment Team - Minimum Team of Two (2)

#### Safety Guidelines

- Walk, do not run.
- Ask yourself, “Is there anything I hear, see, or smell that can endanger me, or anyone nearby?”
- Observe the scene from the sky to the ground:
  1. Look above: downed power lines; downed trees; tall, unstable structures; or anything else that can fall on your head; what will you be walking under?
  2. Look to the middle: what’s the condition of the structure you are approaching; is there smoke or fire; is there a gas leak; cracked walls; what will you be walking into or up to?
  3. Look on the ground: water or chemical spills; are there victims down; are there power lines down; what kind of debris is in the way; what will you be walking through or tripping over?

### BIG PICTURE ASSESSMENT

Any hazard that could spread, such as fire and flood, should be reported as soon as possible to the Planning Section and the SFFD. Find a good view and look up and down the block for obvious major hazards, including:

- Smoke or fire – if night, look for unusual glow or flickering
- Road blockages
- Flooding

Note critical information on the Damage Assessment Form: location, type and extent of hazard, speed at which it is changing or growing.

### QUICK ASSESSMENT

To the extent that it is safe to do so, walk the assigned block, looking over each structure as well as the roadways. At each house or structure do the following:

- Conduct an exterior structural assessment, based upon what can be seen from the curb or sidewalk.
- Identify obvious hazards and structural damage.
- Use caution tape to rope off the approaches to any property that appears hazardous.
- Talk to and observe any victims or bystanders that can be seen. Try to find out the number of people involved and their condition. Ask about any interior damage or other problems at the site.
- Advise the victims what they should do while waiting for more help.
- Document findings on the Damage Assessment Form and, depending upon the priority and need, report the findings to the Staging Area.

### DETAILED ASSESSMENT (HOUSE BY HOUSE)

After the Quick Assessment has been completed, communicate with the Staging Area to see whether you are needed to perform quick assessments on other blocks or other tasks. If you are not immediately needed, cannot contact the Staging Area immediately, and are able and willing to do so, perform a detailed assessment of each structure on the block concentrating on those for which you could not get information from the residents, as follows:

- Walk up to each structure as close as you feel it is safe to do and look for additional damage.
- Peek around the corners to see more than can be seen from the curb.
- Identify any visible hazards.
- Mitigate hazards by turning off gas, water, or power as needed, and putting out small fires.
- If there are no people outside the house, pound on the door and shout for a response. Without entering, try to find out the number and condition of people inside.  
**Remember:** Do not enter any structure without a complete rescue team and proper size-up.
- If necessary, use caution tape to rope off a structure at the property line or around specific hazards.
- Document findings on the Damage Assessment Form and report the information to the Staging Area.

# NERT Position Description: Team Member, Triage & Treatment

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## Field Teams

All volunteers participating in NERT response activities share these responsibilities:

- Carry out the tasks assigned safely. Be aware of the safety of those you supervise and help.
- Understand the tasks you are asked to perform. Be aware of your abilities and available resources.
- Acquire the tools and materials needed.
- Organize and brief team members.
- Use and follow scene size-up before taking action.
- Always record actions taken and report to the team or section leader after completing your tasks.

## Team Members

**Team members** report to the Team Leader, adhere to NERT principles and stay within the scope of their training to effectively respond to a situation. Team members work under the direction of the Team Leader as a cohesive team. They help plan and carry out all team functions. Every team member is responsible for the actions of their team.

## Team Assignments

When activated for an emergency response, the team assignments will follow the guidelines below. Every field team will have a Team Leader and a Safety Officer. Depending on the assignment, you will need additional field team members.

### **Triage & Treatment Team - Minimum Team of Four (4)**

#### **Triage (START)**

A Triage Team may be part of a Search and Rescue Team, but its primary focus is START: Simple Triage and Rapid Treatment. Using "30-2-Can Do", the Triage Team quickly assesses all victims found, determines their status, and initiates basic treatment. A Triage Team may set up a treatment area at or near the rescue scene in order to care for all victims found.

#### **Treatment**

A Treatment Team might be the same team members as the Search and Rescue Team, but it is performing a different function. A triage team must assess whether and where to establish a treatment area. It should be a safe area near the location that the victims are found and as convenient to transportation as possible.

When a treatment area is set up, the team may need to move the victims. A NERT team should never move a victim that they determine to be dead. Teams may use a blanket carry, chair carry or other methods. NERT volunteers should always use safe lifting practices.

A Treatment Team's focus is on thoroughness not rapidity. It operates in a safe environment and thoroughly assesses and treats each victim. Its objective is to make people as comfortable as possible and minimize the risk of their condition deteriorating over the next few hours. The team should identify all major injuries and stabilize them to avoid further aggravation of the injuries. The focus is less on life threatening injuries, but rather the other injuries that could become life threatening if left unattended.

- Make sure the scene is safe; monitor for evolving hazards or other changes.
- Re-evaluate initial triage and continue to treat immediate threats to life.
- Prioritize victims.
- Perform a detailed assessment including Head-to-Toe exam and note significant medical history (signs, allergies, medicines, past issues, event).
- Treat serious injuries by bandaging and splinting.
- Monitor victims or guide a volunteer to monitor them.
- Communicate updates to the Staging Area.
- Work with Staging Area and team to coordinate transport as needed and possible.
- Document what was done and, if the victim was transported, where the victim was moved.
- After the task is complete, request to be reassigned or check out.
- Turn in Victim Treatment Forms and other documentation to the Staging Area.



# NERT Position Description: Team Member, Search, Rescue & Extrication

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## Field Teams

All volunteers participating in NERT response activities share these responsibilities:

- Carry out the tasks assigned safely. Be aware of the safety of those you supervise and help.
- Understand the tasks you are asked to perform. Be aware of your abilities and available resources.
- Acquire the tools and materials needed.
- Organize and brief team members.
- Use and follow scene size-up before taking action.
- Always record actions taken and report to the team or section leader after completing your tasks.

## Team Members

**Team members** report to the Team Leader, adhere to NERT principles and stay within the scope of their training in order to effectively respond to a situation. Team members work under the direction of the Team Leader as a cohesive team. They help plan and carry out all team functions. Every team member is responsible for the actions of their team.

## Team Assignments

When activated for an emergency response, the team assignments will follow the guidelines below. Every field team will have a Team Leader and a Safety Officer. Depending on the assignment, you will need additional field team members.

### Search & Rescue Team - Minimum Team 4-6

A Search and Rescue Team's objective is to rapidly address immediate threats to life – making it possible for people to stay alive for a while. This consists of three tasks:

1. Find people in a damaged structure
2. Rapidly move people in unsafe locations to nearby safe locations
3. Quickly treat any immediate threats to life (shock, severe bleeding, and obstructed airway)

Search & Rescue Team Responsibilities:

- Pay attention to safety
  - Do a careful scene size-up before entering a structure.
  - Make sure that you have two clear escape routes at all times inside the structure.
  - Keep at least one team member outside, watching for evolving hazards, and keeping track of the locations of those inside and outside.
  - Mitigate any small hazards found – put out small fires, turn off electricity, gas, or water if needed, rope off downed wires or other hazards.
- Find and quickly assess victims (triage).
  - If a triage team is needed, notify the Staging Area.
- Plan next steps based on scene conditions and number and condition of victims.
- Move victims to safety if necessary.
- Reevaluate initial triage and treat immediate threats to life.

- Document what was done and what needs to happen.
- When the search is completed, inform the Staging Area. If there are victims that need to be monitored or transported, develop a plan with the Staging Area. If the assignment is complete, you may request to be reassigned or check out.
- In the Staging Area, turn in documentation to the appropriate ICS Section.

The following roles can be helpful in organizing the Search & Rescue Team.

#### LEAD RESCUER

- Direct other less trained rescuers in specific tasks to be done.
- Perform “hands-on” quick assessment of each victim.
- Plan next steps based on scene conditions, hazards, number and condition of victims, and available rescuers.
- Direct movement of victims to safety if necessary.
- Reevaluate initial triage and treat immediate threats to life.

#### SAFETY OFFICER

- Monitor potential changing conditions at the scene and alert Rescuers and Communicator about potential hazards if necessary.
- Monitor the condition and progress of the Rescuers and Scribe inside the structure.
- Manage bystanders and keep untrained people from entering or reentering the structure.
- Designate a safe treatment area for victims.

#### SCRIBE

- Follow Rescuers closely.
- Manage medical rescue packs and hand supplies to the Rescuers as needed, keeping packs clean and uncontaminated
- Document time, treatment, and condition of victims on the Victim Treatment Area Form

#### COMMUNICATOR

- Document the search and rescue “X” on the structure exterior.
- Communicate status and needs to the Staging Area.
- Manage incoming Staging Area calls.
- Direct victims with minor injuries to the treatment area
- Guide volunteers to treat minor injuries and comfort victims

# NERT Position Description: Team Member, Utility Control & Fire Suppression

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## **Field Teams**

All volunteers participating in NERT response activities share these responsibilities:

- Carry out the tasks assigned safely. Be aware of the safety of those you supervise and help.
- Understand the tasks you are asked to perform. Be aware of your abilities and available resources.
- Acquire the tools and materials needed.
- Organize and brief team members.
- Use and follow scene size-up before taking action.
- Always record actions taken and report to the team or section leader after completing your tasks.

## **Team Members**

**Team members** report to the Team Leader, adhere to NERT principles and stay within the scope of their training in order to effectively respond to a situation. Team members work under the direction of the Team Leader as a cohesive team. They help plan and carry out all team functions. Every team member is responsible for the actions of their team.

## **Team Assignments**

When activated for an emergency response, the team assignments will follow the guidelines below. Every field team will have a Team Leader and a Safety Officer. Depending on the assignment, you will need additional field team members.

### **Utility Control & Fire Suppression - Minimum Team of Two (2)**

A team may be sent to help in fire- and utility-related emergencies before professional responders arrive. The team may need to locate shut-offs. If the team is unable to control the affected utility, that information should be relayed to the SFFD Battalion Station ASAP. Utility Control is an important component of Fire safety and prevention.

The size-up is a critical process when responding to fire and utility problems to ensure rescuer safety and to make decisions and respond appropriately in the areas of greatest need.



# NERT Position Description: Member, Evacuation Assistance

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## Field Teams

All volunteers participating in NERT response activities share these responsibilities:

- Carry out the tasks assigned safely. Be aware of the safety of those you supervise and help.
- Understand the tasks you are asked to perform. Be aware of your abilities and available resources.
- Acquire the tools and materials needed.
- Organize and brief team members.
- Use and follow scene size-up before taking action.
- Always record actions taken and report to the team or section leader after completing your tasks.

## Team Assignments

When activated for an emergency response, the team assignments will follow the guidelines below. Every field team will have a Team Leader and a Safety Officer. Depending on the assignment, you will need additional field team members.

### **Evacuation - Minimum Team of Three (3)**

An Evacuation Team may be sent to a specific portion of the neighborhood that is threatened by a growing hazard. The purpose is to notify and evacuate the residents in the area threatened by the hazard. The team leader must ensure that all houses in the assigned area have been notified.

- Make sure that you have a way to escape to safety at all times, should the hazard increase unexpectedly.
- Get to as many houses as possible, as quickly as possible.
- Pound on the door, tell the occupants about the threatening hazard, and encourage them to move to a safe location until the hazard has diminished.
- Note that some people may choose not to evacuate until the threat is imminent. The evacuation team's job is to inform residents of the hazard, not to force them to leave.
- If residents have mobility issues, you can assist them, provided it does not take too long. For example, you can help move someone into a wheel chair, or a wagon, or down some stairs, but you cannot take the time moving them several blocks because you must complete the evacuation assignment. Do your best to get them connected with neighbors for assistance.
- If a house has injured people, you cannot take the time to give care at this point. Inform the Staging Area about the additional needs (Triage Team or Extrication Team) and continue notifying residents in your evacuation area.
- After you have notified the houses in the assigned area, you may request a new assignment or request to check out. If the Staging Area does not have an immediate assignment for you, you may go back and assist anyone you found who needs assistance, while waiting for an assignment. Remember that the Staging Area has the big picture and will assign you to what it considers the highest priority as soon as it identifies the need.



# NERT Position Description: Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer (MRC)

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## **Medical Reserve Corps**

The SFFD MRC assists the SFFD by building a team of non-medical and medically trained professionals including EMT's, paramedics, physicians, nurses, pharmacists, mental health and support personnel that will augment the SFFD response during a man-made or natural disaster.

SFFD MRC may also be requested to assist other agencies such as Department of Public Health (DPH) in the case of an influenza epidemic or mental health support for responders and victims. In addition, the SFFD MRC contributes to meeting the public health needs of the community throughout the year. When SFFD MRC volunteers are requested to perform duties outside of the SFFD, a request will be made to the Program Coordinator. Just-in-time training will be provided to the volunteers before any activity is performed.

SFFD MRC volunteers will be registered with the State Disaster Healthcare Volunteers Network (DHV).

Visit <http://bit.ly/1jL0mUx> for more information, and to get an application

## ***Non-emergency: MRC Activities***

The SFFD MRC will not act as a freestanding medical resource at incident scenes. Rather, unit personnel shall be integrated into the SFFD field emergency medical response system and, to the extent of their training and capabilities, provide medical assistance and support as needed. **Activities may include:**

- Triage
- Assisting at alternative sites of care
- Mental Health Support
- First Aid Station
- Medical Hotline
- Points of Dispensing (POD)
- Public Health Education

## ***Non-emergency: Administrative Assistant***

### **Description**

This is a part time (six hrs. /week – may expand at times) volunteer position. This volunteer will provide administrative support to the MRC unit. Job duties could include the following:

- Respond to telephone inquiries about the MRC and make calls on behalf of the organization
- Perform data entry and maintain the volunteer database
- Manage group e-mail distribution lists
- Assist in preparing presentations and handouts
- Help at training or recruiting events
- Help in maintaining a MRC Facebook page
- Make copies and prepare mailings

## ***Emergency***

MRC volunteers will respond per NERT guidelines. SFFD personnel will make requests for MRC volunteers to fill special assignments to the NERT staging areas.





# NERT Graduate Training:

## By position

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NERT graduate training takes place **every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month** year-round. Topics related to practicing and improving your skills as a NERT are covered at NERT Training Day. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of April and October, the Citywide drills are held. Additional training is scheduled by availability of the instructor or agency. You can find the calendar on the NERT website: <https://sf-fire.org/calendar-special-events>

### Active NERT volunteer

An active NERT volunteer maintains at minimum a current status, recertifying every two years. Recertification training must be within 3 months of expiration date. Ideally, an active volunteer will choose a role below and get additional training as well as participate in NERT drills.

- Drills and training as appropriate
- Psychological First Aid recommended
- \*Recertification

### NERT ICS – Neighborhood Command Post

- Command Post training (classroom)
- Staging Area training (hands-on)
- NERT Forms class
- \*Recertification

### Communications

The NERT Communications Team (NCT) provides a critical link between the neighborhood command post, the field teams and the Battalion Station.

- \*Current FCC license [Not provided by NERT. Visit <http://www.baears.com/> for Ham Cram format; <https://www.sfarc.org/ve-examinations.html> for “test-only” format]
- \*NCT training series
- NERT message writing
- Twitter for NERT communications
- Ask an Elmer – informal sessions designed to work with mentors
- 2-meter critical mass radio practice [Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month. Not provided by NERT. Visit <https://2metercriticalmass.com/>]
- \*Recertification

### Field Team

#### *Damage Assessment surveyor*

- NERT message writing
- \*Recertification

#### *Triage & Treatment*

- Triage and Treatment
- Stop the Bleed
- First Aid [Not offered by NERT]
- \*Recertification

### ***Search & Rescue***

- Search and Rescue
- \*Recertification

### ***Fire Suppression***

During recertification - Class 6

### ***Utility Control***

During recertification - Class 6

### ***Neighborhood Assistant***

- \*Psychological First Aid
- \*Recertification

### ***Block Captain***

- \*Map your block
- \*Recertification

### ***Comfort & Care provider***

- \*Psychological First Aid
- \*Recertification

## **Medical Reserve Corps**

### ***Medical***

- \*Current license
- \*Psychological First Aid
- \*Personal Preparedness
- \*IS-100 (ICS) online course [<https://emilms.fema.gov/IS100c/curriculum/1.html>]
- \*Current First Aid/CPR
- NERT/recertification

### ***Non-medical***

- \*Psychological First Aid
- \*IS-100 (ICS) online course [<https://emilms.fema.gov/IS100c/curriculum/1.html>]
- POD support
- First Aid/CPR
- \*Recertification