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**Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**  
**NATIONAL EMERGENCY TECHNOLOGY (NET) GUARD**  
**PROGRAM GUIDE**

**DRAFT**

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**Homeland  
Security**



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## Purpose and Introduction

This document provides guidance for local, public, or private-public partnership organizations interested in establishing a National Emergency Technology Guard (NET Guard) program. These guidelines provide a road map for NET Guard planners and developers to follow as they progress from concept through development, implementation, and evolution to a mature program. It provides a broad range of actions and considerations that communities can use to initiate and develop the program in their local areas.

The Guide includes a Toolkit that provides resources, ideas, examples, and activities to assist communities in developing local NET Guard Programs. A call-out box is located at the end of each chapter listing the Tool Kit items that relate to the chapter topic. The References Appendix provides useful resources with hyperlinks.

This document's purpose is to aid in the development and management of NET Guard Programs providing support for a broad range of community voice and data communications. Although they are traditionally discrete technologies, new information technology and communications (ITC) systems are quickly developing and becoming increasingly integrated. To ensure the long-term applicability of the program guidance, references to specific systems, technologies, or implementations are only included as examples.

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## Section 1. Introduction to the NET Guard Program

The NET Guard Program develops and coordinates pre-trained and credentialed volunteers for assistance with community emergency information technology and communication.

All NET Guard Programs are locally based and used to meet emergency-related information technology, and communications (ITC) needs such as:

- Providing temporary restoration of internet connectivity and voice communication to affected areas
- Providing ITC support to community organizations responding to a disaster
- Providing additional ITC staffing(Surge capacity) as needed in periods of high demand for technical services
- Providing assistance to emergency management officials with information management and internet-based outreach efforts
- Collaborating with virtual volunteers assisting in disaster response and recovery efforts from remote locations

NET Guard Programs are based in local government or private, non-profit organizations. Each community tailors its NET Guard Program to local needs, hazards, and vulnerabilities. The information in this Program Guide and Toolkit serves as a framework for developing a successful NET Guard Program, but each jurisdiction is encouraged to adapt the program.

### 1.1.NET Guard Program Background

Following authorization in the Homeland Security Act of 2002, the NET Guard Program concept initial development focused on defining the program scope. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) developed a concept of operations through a stakeholder work group whose members included potential partners representing State and local governments, emergency managers, the private sector, and DHS Divisions. In 2007, the FEMA Individual & Community Preparedness Division (ICPD) began the development and piloting of a NET Guard Program concept based on local implementation similar to thousands of locally developed Citizen Corps Partner Programs like the Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) and the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC).

FEMA worked with four local jurisdictions and three private-public partnerships to pilot and refine the NET Guard Program.

#### NET Guard is:

- A Citizen Corps Partner Program
- Affiliated with local government through emergency management (EM), IT department, or other government entity
- Integrated into local Emergency Operations Plans (EOP)
- Organized in partnerships between local government and the private sector.

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Local jurisdiction emergency managers, IT and communications leads, and volunteer managers developed the local program pilots in their jurisdictions. Three privately based preparedness and resiliency organizations reviewed the NET Guard Program concept and worked to refine and tailor the NET Guard Program for their communities. These jurisdictions and organizations tested the program concept and provided tools, resources, and feedback reflected in the development of the NET Guard Program and this Guide.

## 1.2. Facts about NET Guard

NET Guard provides local jurisdictions with organized, trained, and skilled volunteers to support a wide range of Information Technology and Communications (ITC) services for government, private non-profit organizations, and other private sector entities providing essential emergency services. Additionally, NET Guard Programs may support related emergency management efforts by providing ITC services such as preparedness and education, expertise in technology, crisis mapping, data management, social media monitoring and outreach, and acting as a liaison between virtual volunteers and emergency management efforts.

NET Guard teams do not respond to cyber-security incidents that require real-time network response, nor do they engage in full repair, or reconstruction of public and private sector proprietary information management systems, or other Information Technology and communications systems. NET Guard supplements resources but does not substitute for government pre-disaster planning and contracts.

Potential NET Guard service areas include:

- Temporary restoration, alternate or backup voice and data communications systems for governmental entities, non-profit organizations, and private sector organizations providing essential services during emergency response and recovery
- Working with diverse sources to develop crisis maps for multiple preparedness and response purposes
- Monitoring and interacting with social media and internet communication
- Providing education for the community on ITC preparedness including cyber-security awareness and basic continuity through data backups, and remote storage
- Collaborating with virtual volunteers to use internet-based technologies to improve communication and situational awareness of a disaster
- Establishing alternate or backup systems to alert the public or to provide information following an emergency
- Assisting with communications to support shelters and evacuation, including communication services for evacuees and shelter residents
- Establishing and administering database systems for volunteer management
- Providing support for connecting displaced individuals to friends, family members, or emergency or recovery support

- Establishing resource-tracking systems, including information systems to support the receipt, assessment, and distribution of donated resources
- Participating in advance planning, prevention, and preparedness activities, including establishing a community inventory or registry of IT and communications systems and anticipated needs during an incident
- Supporting preparation for ITC related continuity of operations

### 1.3.NET Guard Public Sector Model

The base for the public sector, government-sponsored model is:

- Government sponsors programs consisting of one or more teams
- Government has responsibility for organizing, staffing, training, and deploying teams.
- The NET Guard Program identifies and provides emergency ITC needs, functions, and services in their community
- Partnerships with the Private Sector to assist in providing expertise and resources, including needs assessment, development, recruitment, and training.

In FY 2008, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) competitively funded NET Guard Pilot Programs in four Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) jurisdictions to test and evaluate the program concept. These pilot programs are located in Hamilton County, IN, the City of Austin, TX: the City of Chesapeake, VA and Cottonwood Heights City, UT.

Each of these NET Guard Programs developed its functions to meet the needs identified within their community. Examples of NET Guard functions provided by these pilots include:

- ITC support for shelters, volunteer reception center sites, evacuation staging center
- Communication back-up for the EOC or isolated critical city offices
- Staffing for a mobile capability to provide essential ITC services to the public
- Staffing expertise for crisis mapping
- Support for government and non-profit voluntary organizations by providing essential ITC services during and after an

- **Hamilton County, IN** - NET Guard Program provides communication and IT support for responders on the ground and for other volunteer responder groups
- **Austin** - NET Guard Program supports communications for the public in shelters in collaboration with the local chapter of the American Red Cross
- **Cottonwood Heights** - NET Guard Program provides support for mapping and reporting neighborhood level resident welfare in disasters as well as mobile ITC capability
- **Chesapeake** – NET Guard Program is chartered to help preserve, restore, and sustain critical communications and technology infrastructure in support of emergency operations across a large geographic area of distributed city services.

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## **1.4.NET Guard Private-Public Partnership Model**

The base for the private sector, corporate, or non-profit model is:

- Private sector organizations or corporations sponsor programs with one or more teams
- The private sector sponsor has the responsibility for organizing, staffing, and training volunteer teams
- Teams are deployed on request by and through emergency management as part of a pre-disaster agreement and plan
- Partnerships with government include needs assessment, prioritization, credentialing, pre-disaster integration, joint exercises and training

In FY 2010, FEMA began to expand the NET Guard Program concept and support its design through development and promotion of private-public partnership models.

FEMA identified communities and partnerships based on criteria recognized as indicators of successful private-public partnerships including:

- Partnership representation from a range of private and public entities
- Identification of a champion interested in the NET Guard program potential for their organization
- Partnership experience with related programs
- Commitment from the sponsoring organization based on recognized benefit
- Demonstrated capability in emergency management and ITC

The following private-public Partnerships reviewed the NET Guard Program concept and worked to tailor and develop the concept to meet local needs: the California Resiliency Alliance and the Bay Area InfraGard, San Francisco, CA; the Colorado Emergency Preparedness Partnership, Denver, CO; and the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments, Charleston, SC.

## **1.5.NET Guard Program Compared to a NET Guard Team**

Depending on the size and scope of the NET Guard Program, a Program may include one or more NET Guard Teams operating within the Program. A Program may have teams with different functions for example: a team assigned to the Emergency Operations Center to provide crisis-mapping support or a team assigned to deploy in a vehicle to provide on-site ITC capabilities. In large jurisdictions, teams may organize geographically to provide multiple services within a geographic area. The Guide discusses considerations for Team organization in section 6.4.

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## **1.6. Citizen Corps Program**

The NET Guard Program is designed as a national Citizen Corps partner program affiliated with local government emergency management or other government sponsor, integrated into local emergency operations plans, and organized in partnership between local government and the private sector. Current Citizen Corps partner programs include Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS), Neighborhood Watch, and Fire Corps.

The Citizen Corps mission is to engage the whole community in collaborative planning and activities to make communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to and recover from any emergency. Partner programs provide opportunities for the public to participate in a range of measures to make their families, their homes, and their communities safer from the threats of crime, terrorism, and disasters of all kinds.

The Citizen Corps mission is accomplished through a national network of state, local, territorial and tribal Citizen Corps Councils, partner programs and extensive local partnerships. Councils carry out a local strategy to involve government, community leaders, and citizens in all-hazards preparedness and resilience.

## **1.7. Regional and Local Organizations**

Many communities have regional or local associations, councils and organizations that encourage the coordination of emergency preparedness activities between private and public sector organizations such as Local Emergency Planning Committees and Councils of Government. Communities also have voluntary organizations that manage volunteers who support all phases of emergency management. These organizations are potential partners to coordinate, sponsor or provide resources in support of a local NET Guard Program. Regional and local partnership examples are provided in the appendix of this Guide.

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## 1.8. Tools to Help Introduce the NET Guard Model

Tool Kit items relating to this section of the NET Guard Guide are listed below.

Title or Description	File Name	Public/ Private
City of Chesapeake, Virginia NET Guard Program Overview (June 2010)	NET Guard Presentation- Chesapeake, VA Pilot.ppt	Public
City of Chesapeake, Virginia NET Guard Program Overview (May 2010)	Chesapeake, VA NET Guard Pilot.ppt	Public
Cottonwood Heights NET Guard Program Overview	Cottonwood Heights, UT NET Guard Pilot.ppt	Public
Hamilton County, Indiana NET Guard Program Overview	Hamilton County, IN NET Guard Pilot.ppt	Public

## Section 2. NET Guard Program Development Overview

Developing a NET Guard Program requires collaboration and support from your community. There are common principles and best practices for planning and development for sustainable community-based programs. The principles and processes in this Guide are based on those common principles with specific guidance and resources related to the NET Guard mission and structures. The development process described in this Program Guide is a framework, and can be adapted to the resources and needs of each jurisdiction.

FEMA’s Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101, Version 2.0, is a useful document for assisting with community program development and emergency planning. CPG 101 provides emergency and homeland security managers and other emergency services personnel with FEMA’s recommendations on how to address the entire planning process from forming a planning team, to writing and maintaining the plan, to executing the plan. CPG 101 is also an invaluable resource to developing a program like NET Guard, especially Sections 1 and 4 that discuss the planning process.

The seven basic steps shown below, drawn from the planning steps in CPG 101, outline a community-based program development process. These steps correspond to sections in this Program Guide. The process is designed for continuous improvement using the same steps to update planning and development to meet community needs.



### 2.1. Tools to Support the NET Guard Planning Approach

The Tool Kit items listed below directly relate to this section of the NET Guard Guide.

Title or Description	File Name	Public/ Private
FEMA Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101	Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101: Developing and Maintaining Emergency Operations Plans	Either

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## Section 3. Form a Collaborative Planning Team

### 3.1. Overview

Forming a collaborative planning team is the first step of developing a NET Guard Program. The idea to develop a NET Guard Program in a community typically begins with one or two “champions” – individuals who see a need and advocate starting a program. A champion will bring together a core of individuals who can provide skills, expertise, contacts, and connections that will aid in developing and refining the program. These individuals are the initial “collaborative planning team.”

Members of the collaborative planning team may:

- Assist in developing the concept into a functional program
- Build support among government and nongovernment organizations, including for-profit and not-for profit businesses
- Provide valuable insight from professional experiences in program development, emergency management, volunteer management, new technologies and social media, or ITC operations

The collaborative planning team should coordinate from the start with local emergency management and the local government’s IT department. Support from these groups is important to program development.



### 3.2. Identify Individuals to Form the Collaborative Planning Team

The responsibility of the champion is to attract individuals to help with the development the NET Guard Program. These individuals are subject matter experts who can be program leaders, advisors, recruiters, and activists during the implementation process of the NET Guard Program.

Examples of individuals to consider for a NET Guard collaborative planning team include:

- A representative from the local government emergency management agency
- A representative from the local government ITC

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- A local IT professional who understands ITC needs during a disaster, knows the local IT private sector, and is part of the local ITC professional community
  - A representative from the local Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD), Community Organizations Active in Disasters (COAD) or Volunteer Center
  - A manager or champion from a well established voluntary program such as Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) or Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)
  - A individual who has experience and technical skills related to social media or virtual volunteerism
  - An active civic volunteer leader who knows the needs of the community well

The tool “Organizing a NET Guard Collaborative Planning Team” listed at the end of this section lists types of individuals and organizations for your consideration in building the collaborative planning team. The recommendation for the size of the core of the collaborative planning team is five to ten individuals to form a manageable working group with a variety of expertise.

The basis of the NET Guard Program concept of operations is on its integration with local emergency plans. Volunteers provide services that meet local needs for ITC support during an emergency. Therefore, it is essential to include local government emergency managers in the collaborative planning team.

Although individuals may vary their level of involvement as the NET Guard development process proceeds, it is important to maintain continuity of leadership throughout the process.

### **3.3.Outline the Initial Local Program Concept**

A key factor in organizing a NET Guard Program is understanding the community and how the program can best support the community by addressing local needs. Initial considerations for the collaborative planning team to adapt and refine include:

- Examine the community’s disaster-related technology and communication needs requiring assistance
- Identify needs that could be provided by trained volunteers
- Target both government and non-governmental organizations with an interest in receiving the kinds of support that NET Guard teams provide
- Identify community-wide program partners from both government and non-government.
- Refine the concept based upon needs, resources, and partners

The NET Guard Program will be refined throughout the development process; however, it is important to outline a general concept and direction for the program

After identifying the collaborative planning team and outlining a general concept for the NET Guard Program, the collaborative planning team should meet and develop a general plan to guide the program development. Topics for discussion include:

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- What partners should be included?
  - Who are the proposed recipients of services, and who are the providers?
  - How should the NET Guard Program engage the community and promote the program to others?
  - Who should be the lead or sponsoring organization, particularly for the start-up of the NET Guard Program?
  - What are some of the functions that the NET Guard Program will perform?

### **3.4.Engage the Community**

After creating a general plan to outline the NET Guard Program, the collaborative planning team should begin to engage the community by inviting potential partners to meet and discuss the NET Guard concept. An introductory NET Guard presentation and sample meeting agenda are included in the Toolkit. During this meeting:

- Discuss local needs that NET Guard can support
- Identify stakeholders, interested private sector partners, and potential resources
- Identify challenges to be addressed
- Reach a consensus on the program's value within the community
- Establish next steps and schedule a follow-up meeting

### **3.5.Develop and Distribute a Program Development Timeline**

Based on the discussion with partners and community leaders, the collaborative planning team should develop and distribute a revised outline of the NET Guard Program and a development timeline. This document should state in broad terms the major tasks and expected timeframe. Creating and distributing this document is an important piece of the process as it states the intent to develop the NET Guard Program and the steps involved. It also keeps your development on schedule and explains the design of the program and the implementation process.

### 3.6. Tools to Support Forming a Collaborative Team

Tool Kit items relating to this section of the NET Guard Guide are listed below.

Title or Description	File Name	Public/ Private
** NET Guard Tool Kit: Organizing a NET Guard collaborative planning team (may need to be updated) **	Organizing a NET Guard collaborative planning team.docx	Either
Fact Sheet about the FEMA Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Groups	FEMA RECCWG Fact Sheet.pdf	Either
Program Partnerships established by Hamilton County *Example*	Hamilton County - Program Establishment and Partnerships.doc	Either
NET Guard Tool Kit: Sample collaborative planning team Meeting Agenda	Sample Planning Team Meeting Agenda.docx	Either
NET Guard Tool Kit: Sample NET Guard Informational Meeting Invitation	Sample Planning Team Meeting Invitation.docx	Either

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## Section 4. Understand Your Local Community

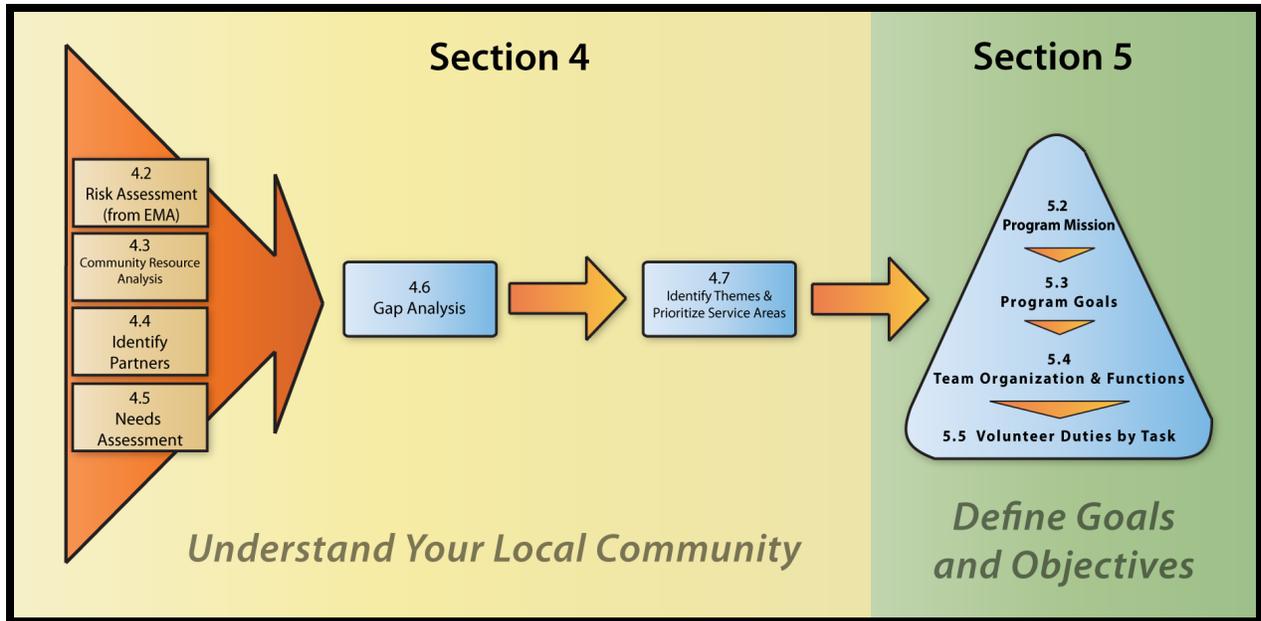
### 4.1.Overview

This section helps you determine the disaster technology and communication needs of your community and functions that a NET Guard Program can support. Understanding your community will help you:

- Catalog existing risks, needs, capabilities, partners, and gaps
- Justify resources
- Promote collaboration among local agencies, organizations, and businesses
- Support decision making+



Sections 4 and 5 focus on understanding your community and defining the goals for your NET Guard Program. The graphic below illustrates how the steps relate to each other. When performing the assessment and analysis described in Sections 4 and 5, be sure to keep the topics focused on potential ITC services. The program development in these sections will determine the defining features of the Program – the services that will be provided, the technical functions the volunteers will perform to support the services, how the volunteers will be organized to deliver the services.



## 4.2. Review your Community's Multi-Hazard Risk Assessment

Begin your community assessment with an understanding of the types of threats and hazards your community could face, and the ways these hazards can affect people, infrastructure, and businesses – particularly data and voice communication. The NET Guard collaborative planning team should include or coordinate with local emergency management officials who are subject matter experts and understand the kinds of hazards faced in the community. In addition to local experts and plans, FEMA has national hazard information available on the FEMA web site. State emergency management web sites provide information on hazards in the state and region and what to expect from hazard impact.

Next, think about the ways in which a trained NET Guard team can prepare for and respond to these impacts. Understanding the types of hazards that can potentially affect the area in which NET Guard Program operates makes it easier to determine the consequences and ITC gaps that may occur during and after a disaster.

## 4.3. Research Existing Community Resources, Emergency Operations Plans

Once you have reviewed your community's risk analysis and considered each hazard's potential impact on ITC and other information, communication or technology needs, begin identifying your community's resources, its existing emergency operations plans, and emergency response systems, both public and private, to determine how a NET Guard Program will be most effective in providing additional resources to fill gaps. Documenting the review of your community's

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resources will be valuable when forming community partnerships, explained further in “4.4 Identify External Partners.” Areas to consider analyzing in your community review include:

- Emergency operations plans
- Emergency response and recovery support organizations
- Existing government and business continuity of operations plans
- Partnerships and organizations supporting collaborative planning and support for resilience, particularly the role of ITC including: Citizen Corps Councils, local chapters of InfraGard, organizations supporting response and recovery such as Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters, economic development partnerships, local chapters of the Association of Contingency Planners, and other similar private-sector groups and associations
- Amateur Radio clubs and their function within the emergency operations plans
- ITC support in place for organizations and their emergency response, for example, the IT support team for the local chapter of the American Red Cross, IT support for a local Medical Reserve Corps
- Community and neighborhood civic, faith based and service organizations and other communication and support networks necessary to resume daily activities for recovery

Reviewing emergency plans for your community organizations provides a good understanding of the function these groups perform in an emergency. It also shows the areas that already have or may need additional ITC support needs during a disaster or require a surge of support from the NET Guard Program. Be sure to consider recovery planning and organizations as well since many ITC functions may help the transition between response and recovery.

When building your NET Guard Program, it is important to build on the existing community strengths. Many communities have active Citizen Corps Councils, CERT Programs, Medical Reserve Corps Programs, COADS, American Red Cross chapters, Volunteer Centers, or other organizations. NET Guard Programs have found success working with these groups to aid with identifying community needs, volunteer recruitment and management, and long-term sustainability.

#### **4.4. Identify External Partners**

As you build the NET Guard Program, the circle of external partners will increase. Performing an initial assessment of your community’s resources provides you with a list of existing emergency management, response, and recovery organizations within your community. Working with these individuals to support their priorities and build on strengths helps prevent duplication or competing with existing capabilities. Publically and privately based NET Guard Programs must collaborate and work with local government emergency management to ensure support, integration with the Emergency Operation Plan and to avoid duplication of efforts.

Forming and maintaining partnerships is a continuous process. Periodically brainstorm with your collaborative planning team, asking the following questions:

- 
- If a disaster were to occur, which community groups would need the most assistance from ITC support and would benefit most from a NET Guard team?
  - Which local efforts are underway that NET Guard can help support?
  - What additional roles can NET Guard perform during a disaster, and are there groups that can help with these roles?
  - Are there any organizations that may require more-specialized kinds of ITC support, such as ones that assist people who speak languages other than English, persons with functional and access needs or disabilities, or people with less access to communication during a disaster?

Examples of the above may include working with shelters that would like to provide internet access, using online translation tools to translate forms and documents needed to begin disaster recovery, or working with a faith-based group to track community needs and resources electronically.

Always look out for potential partners with a shared mission or complementary function. Local businesses have resources to help support the NET Guard Program may also be facilitate recruiting volunteers from among their employees. Continually searching and engaging partners is important as it can take time for people to realize the different ways that a NET Guard Program can contribute to the community. People who understand both technology and how technology can support community emergency functions are particularly critical to helping identify potential community needs that can benefit from technology solutions.

A good approach to forming partnerships is finding ways that the NET Guard Program can augment an existing response or recovery organization. Many communities have traditionally focused primarily on ITC support to government response. Consider the ITC needs of service providers required to support broader public response and community recovery, including support to non-profits or direct support to the public, or interactive communication with the public.

#### **4.5. Perform a Needs Assessment**

After identifying key partners and potential service recipients, the collaborative planning team should conduct a needs assessment incorporating an understanding of the community, local hazards and their impacts, and emergency response and recovery plans. Following are some basic steps to conduct a needs assessment:

1. Identify individuals and organizations that will take part in the assessment based on their role in disasters or their knowledge of ITC needs
2. Determine a range of methods for identifying public and private sector service needs including a work session with representatives from multiple groups, interviews of key organization leaders, meetings with organizations by sector or role in disasters, and written or electronic surveys.

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3. Conduct the assessment and document the assessment findings.
  4. Prepare a report summarizing identified needs with recommendations.

#### **4.5.1. Identify the Assessment Community**

A good needs assessment involves and has commitment from all relevant individuals and organizations within the community, including:

- Emergency management
- Local government, especially representation from the IT department, the public information official
- Voluntary emergency response and recovery organizations
- Businesses and business associations
- Civic, Faith-based and other organizations providing human services support
- Neighborhood associations and others

A good strategy is to start the assessment process with the partners identified in “4.4 Identify External Partners” along with members of your collaborative planning team and local government officials. These stakeholders can use their circles of influence to expand the reach of the assessment. An inclusive and comprehensive needs assessment is more likely to result in the development of a NET Guard Program that focuses on key priorities and critical gaps to deliver services that are of strong value to the community.

#### **4.5.2. Determine the Needs Assessment Process**

Although all members of the planning team should participate in the discussions, it will facilitate the needs assessment process if one or two individuals take responsibility for designing, conducting and reporting on the results for the planning team. There are various approaches for conducting the needs assessment. They include:

- Researching existing data, including disaster after-action reports - The assessment can draw from after action reports and similar documents that captured information after an exercise, disaster, or during an independent plan or preparedness review. The lessons learned from past exercises and disasters can outline in detail the areas in most need of ITC support.
- Group discussions on topics related to NET Guard functions and the use of technology during disasters
- Interviews with subject matter experts from response and recovery as well as potential recipients of NET Guard services - For example, conduct interviews with the local emergency manager, government IT coordinator, and volunteer response and recovery groups within the community. This approach provides in-depth, qualitative information for the NET Guard Program

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- Surveys and questionnaires – For example, send surveys to local businesses, faith-based groups, neighborhood associations, or individuals in the community who can contribute or collaborate with the NET Guard Program. This approach provides a broader insight into the community

Surveys, interviews, and discussions should focus on identifying known ITC challenges a community has faced or may face during a disaster, and ways that a NET Guard Program can help address those needs. It is challenging to ask questions that are both open-ended yet specific enough to prompt individuals representing organizations with different mission areas to think about disasters. Addressing the community's needs for incidents such as power outages, cell phone interruption, high demand for data and voice services, or other interruptions requires understanding the public needs as well as input from individuals with knowledge of ITC. Spend time developing questions for interviews and surveys to both gain an understanding of the topics and terminology and engage in follow-up questions and discussion. Before conducting the assessment, it is a good idea to test the questions on a small group of individuals or by an evaluation from a subject matter expert.

Consider how best to record information to make it easiest to analyze and summarize for the collaborative team. After the surveys and interviews are complete, compile all of the data into an easily manageable format such as a list or database.

#### **4.5.3. Prepare a Report with Recommendations**

Since the NET Guard program development will refer to the needs assessment as an important base for designing the program, it is worth preparing a formal report for presenting to the planning team and the community. Even a simple needs assessment report should include elements such as:

- A brief overview
- List of participants in the needs assessment process
- A description of the assessment and analysis process
- 5-10 of the top concerns, findings, or observations
- An explanation of how the findings will shape the development of the NET Guard Program

The process does not need to be complex and the report does not need to be long to be effective. A one-page list that identifies the types of services such as voice, data support, computer networking, or mapping and the potential recipients is sufficient to outline the findings of the needs assessment process. Present and discuss the report's findings in a meeting with the NET Guard Program's collaborative planning team, partners, and representatives of all participants of the needs assessment process.

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## 4.6. Perform a Gap Analysis

Once the NET Guard Collaborative planning team has reviewed the community's risk assessment, documented the community's resources, identified partners, and analyzed the community's ITC needs during and following a disaster, the next step is synthesizing the information into a gap analysis. A gap analysis simply reviews the information collected and identified areas in need of additional support.

Since a discussion of needs frequently focuses naturally on gaps, the people interviewed and surveyed as part of the needs assessment are likely to identify areas where there are gaps in existing emergency response and recovery support. Interviews and surveys can include questions to identify needs, gaps and priorities as part of the same process.

Examining gaps highlights the challenges that the community faces providing communication and information technology services to support preparing for, responding to, and recovering from a disaster. The gap review by the planning team should consider and decide:

- Of the listed gaps, which gaps can a NET Guard Program bridge with trained volunteers?
- Will the NET Guard Program be able to obtain the resources required to fill the particular gap?
- What other governmental and non-governmental partners will the NET Guard Program have to collaborate with to bridge the identified gap?
- What gaps are high priorities?
- What high priority gaps can NET Guard fill most easily for immediate benefit?

For example, the collaborative planning team may find that ITC support is available for shelter operations communications but does not include services to residents in the shelter for family reunification, access to disaster assistance programs and websites, or other recovery efforts. The gap analysis may reveal that trained ITC staff supporting Emergency Support Function #6, Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services, the local chapter of the American Red Cross or the Medical Reserve Corps is limited. This identifies support for communications for shelter residents as a gap that NET Guard volunteers could fill. In addition to providing trained staff, the NET Guard team would need to obtain laptops and network access in order to provide these services.

At the end of the gap analysis, the collaborative planning team should have a comprehensive understanding of the community's emergency ITC needs, the specific functions needed to bridge the gaps, and the service areas that are priorities for the NET Guard Program functions.

## 4.7. Identify Themes and Prioritize Service Areas

The collaborative planning team should now have a list of disaster ITC gaps within the community. The next step is to begin looking for similarities between these gaps and finding trends and themes. When reviewing the themes and potential service areas of the NET Guard

Program, the list should not be a “wish-list” of everything that the NET Guard Program can potentially accomplish. Instead, it should relate to the results of the needs assessment, risk analysis, and the capabilities that the collaborative planning team firmly believes the NET Guard Program can provide. Consultation with local government emergency management officials can help determine priorities.

The top themes identified become the NET Guard Program’s service areas. Service areas are broad areas of support that the NET Guard Program can provide. Consider the list of prioritized service areas a “living” document that continues to develop as the NET Guard Program grows. Initially, the collaborative planning team may only target a few top priorities. However, as the program grows, review the list periodically to identify additional areas that may augment the program’s initial scope.

#### 4.8. Tools to Help Understand Your Local Community

List below are Tool Kit items relating to this section of the NET Guard Guide.

Title or Description	File Name	Public/Private
California CRA Bay Area NET Guard Working Group Needs Assessment Survey Presentation	Bay Area NET Guard - Overview of Needs Assessment Survey.ppt	Either
NET Guard Tool Kit: Beginning Questions for a NET Guard Needs Assessment.ppt	Beginning Questions for a NET Guard Needs Assessment.ppt	Either
Overview on engaging the whole community by CARRI	Engaging the Full Fabric to Build Resilience (CARRI).pptx	Either

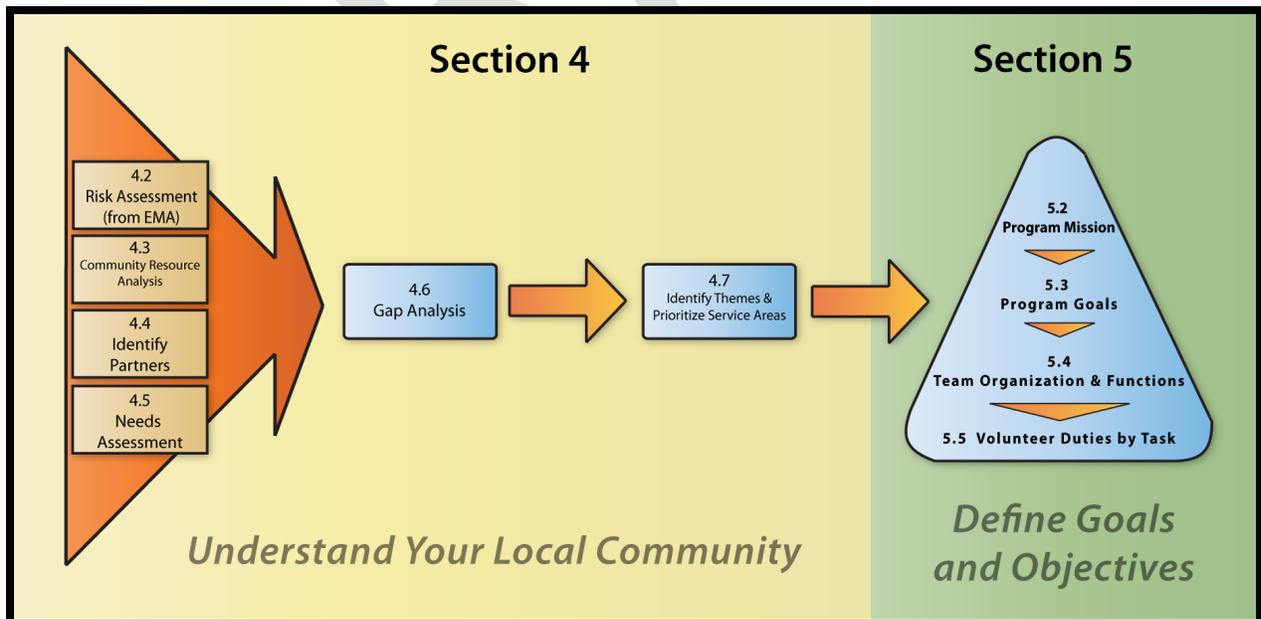
## Section 5. Define Goals and Objectives

### 5.1. Overview

Once the assessments are complete, the collaborative planning team should restate its priorities as goals and objectives. These goals and objectives will serve as a roadmap for what to accomplish and the time needed for completion. Achievement of these will also serve as the benchmarks for measuring your success.



The diagram below shows how the prioritized service areas identified in the “Understand Your Local Community” step feed into Defining Goals and Objectives.



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## 5.2. Establish a Mission

The mission statement should be a one-to two-sentence statement of the NET Guard purpose and values. Your mission statement will concisely explain the purpose of your NET Guard Program. It will help focus the decisions that develop in support of the mission and provide an additional way to maintain your effort's focus.

**The mission of the City of Austin National Emergency Technology Guard (NET Guard) pilot program is to train and prepare volunteers as well as assist in responding to disastrous events affecting technology infrastructures within the Central Texas region.**

## 5.3. Establish Goals from Service Areas

Goals are broad, general statements that indicate what the NET Guard Program will do. Goals result from the prioritized service areas identified in Section 5. Each prioritized service area should have a separate goal.

Goals serve to answer the questions:

- What desired result should the deployed personnel and equipment resources achieve?
- What will define a successful deployment of the teams?
- What will define a successful implementation of the Program?

Examples of NET Guard goals are:

- Support Emergency Operations Center ITC through voice and radio communications
- Establish ITC capabilities for the public in an area shelter or internet access in an evacuation staging area
- Liaison with virtual volunteers to augment validated ITC support for emergency management
- Work with GIS analysts to support regional crisis mapping initiatives for emergency management communication with responders and the public
- Provide ITC services for neighborhood wellness checks and reporting systems
- Establish mobile ITC capability to support emergency management and essential services in locations without adequate communications

## 5.4. Team Organization and Functions

NET Guard Programs may choose to have more than one NET Guard Team with Team configuration determined by either function or geography or both. NET Guard Team configurations and functions are flexible and related to the local NET Guard Program's goals. Initial pilots have primarily established multifunction teams with some jurisdictions forming multifunctional teams by geographic area. Based on the requirements of the response, the team/s identifies the scope of the required services, determines a strategy for providing the functions,

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deploys the team’s resources to provide the functions, and documents the actions and results. All teams should follow the principles of the Incident Command System (ICS) by establishing a team leader and a clear chain of command so that each member has only one person that he or she takes direction from and responds. Disasters may require specialized functions and jurisdictions may opt to develop teams with specific functions e.g. services for the public or crisis mapping. Considerations for team organization follow similar considerations for organization of other types of teams as outlined in the National Incident Management System.

### **5.5.Volunteer Duties by Task**

NET Guard Team leaders typically assign tasks to individual volunteers or small groups of volunteers related to the particular NET Guard Team’s functions. An example of a task related to the function of providing ITC services to sheltering organizations would be to set up a local area network within a shelter. The Team Leader is responsible for handling or delegating each function.

### **5.6.Tools to Help Define Goals and Objectives**

Tool kit items relating to this section of the NET Guard Guide are listed below.

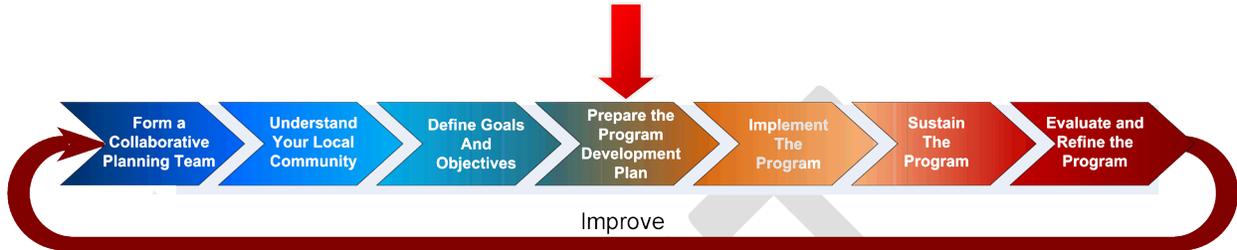
<b>Title or Description</b>	<b>File Name</b>	<b>Public/ Private</b>
Hamilton County NET Guard Functions and Capabilities Overview	Hamilton County - Functions and Capabilities.doc	Either

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## Section 6. Prepare the Program Development Plan

### 6.1.Overview

After acquiring information from the previous sections, document it in the plan to implement the NET Guard Program. This section outlines how to construct a program plan.



### 6.2.Use Partners to Help Refine the Program

As the NET Guard Program continues to develop, make certain to include many community stakeholders in the process. The collaborative planning team should work with partners and experts from the community to refine the program. Bringing together a diverse skill-set into a workshop or workgroup- helps to identify, and resolve challenges that the NET Guard Program may face. Individuals with the following areas of expertise should be included:

- Program management
- Emergency management
- Recovery services
- ITC knowledge
- Volunteer management
- Community organization
- Administration
- Marketing
- Training



The goal is to augment the collaborative planning team with individuals who can help develop, build, implement, and move the program forward. NET Guard Programs must collaborate with local government emergency management to establish a dependable resource and to be included in the emergency operations plan.

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## 6.3. Create the NET Guard Program Plan

Although the initial planning process may start out informally, development of a written planning document allows the Program to move forward with structured policies, organization, and integration with the local emergency response and recovery services. The NET Guard collaborative planning team should work with partners and subject matter experts to develop a document that reflects their program development and can serve as the base for implementing and sustaining the NET Guard Program and the partnerships required for program support.

The remainder of this sub-section describes the plan in further detail. The list below is an outline of resources in this section and can serve as a guide for program development plan components.

### **Components of the NET Guard program plan include:**

#### **6.4. Program Management**

- 6.3.1. Refined Mission Statement
- 6.3.2. Description of the Program and Approach
- 6.3.3. Schedule, Timelines, and Milestones
- 6.3.4. Roles of the Partners
- 6.3.5. Program Organization
- 6.3.6. Team Organization
- 6.3.7. Budget and Funding
- 6.3.8. Outreach and Marketing Planning
- 6.3.9. Team Activation

#### **6.5. Volunteers Management**

- 6.4.1. Volunteer Recruitment
- 6.4.2. Volunteer Application and Documentation
- 6.4.3. Credentialing and Screening Volunteers
- 6.4.4. Volunteer Liability

#### **6.6. Equipment and Facilities Management**

#### **6.7. Training and Exercise**

- 6.6.1. Resources Needed
- 6.6.2. General Emergency Response Training
- 6.6.3. NET Guard-specific Training
- 6.6.4. Tabletop Exercises
- 6.6.5. Participation in Broader Community Exercises

#### **6.8. Addressing Known Issues and Sustainability Management**

#### **6.9. Policies and Procedures Development**

#### **6.10. Defining How the Program Will Evaluate and Measure Success**

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## 6.4. Program Management

### 6.4.1. Refined and Document the Mission Statement

The program plan should start with the mission statement formulated during the initial planning process. Refine it as necessary to incorporate the knowledge gained as a part of the development process.

### 6.4.2. Document a Description of the Program and Approach

The program plan should provide a short overview of the program and the approach used to build, implement, and sustain it. This serves as an introduction and overview of the NET Guard Program.

### 6.4.3. Document Schedule, Timelines, and Milestones

The plan should include a timeline for major steps or events in the NET Guard Program's development. At this point in the process, many of these steps have been completed; this step documents the outcomes. For future steps, outline the tasks to complete for each activity. Define the resources and people responsible for completing the task and the timeframe. Describe dependencies where they exist so the planning team is aware that the progress on one task may affect the progress of others.

Identify significant dates or milestones to track the plan's progress. Examples of milestones include:

- **Planning**
  - Planning team is established
  - Assessments are completed
  - Partnerships are defined
- **Program Development**
  - Program Manager is in place
  - Structure of the program development plan is defined
  - Mission, goal, and objectives are defined and agreed upon
  - Policies and procedures are documented, communicated, and implemented
  - Resource needs and acquisition plans are in place
  - Plans are in place for team activation, volunteer management, communications, and risk management
  - Implementation task checklist is defined
  - Program evaluation factors have been defined
  - Program development plan is complete

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- **Implementation**
    - Volunteer recruiting begun
    - Kick-off meeting conducted
    - Program is fully staffed
    - Staff members are trained
    - Resources acquired

An outline of tasks and will help track and manage the program development process and keep it moving forward.

#### 6.4.4. Document the Roles of the Partners

Partners can support all areas of program development and delivery and can perform multiple roles throughout the planning, building, implementing, and sustaining the program. Strong partnerships can aid with functional expertise, equipment, qualified volunteers, or other essential resources or facilities that can help the NET Guard Program.

Written agreements with partners should be in place. Agreements can take the form of agreements to charters, letters of intent, or more formal memoranda of understanding (MOU) or memoranda of agreement (MOA). These agreements should outline partner roles and responsibilities for program activities, including community outreach, recruitment of team members. Experience shows that written agreements regarding specific donated resources may require building relationships over time and experience working together sharing resources.

#### 6.4.5. Document the Program's Organization

The NET Guard Program organization must be consistent with NIMS and ICS guidelines and based on local needs. The organization of the program should define the following:

- The chain of command and formal communication relationships among staff, volunteers, and external organizations
- Leadership roles and responsibilities

All NET Guard Programs should have outlined the following roles. Additional roles relate to specific service areas. In most cases, individuals will fill multiple roles and functions. For example, the Program Manager, NET Guard Team Coordinator and Operations manager may be one person. An authorized qualified volunteer may perform all roles or functions.

**If you are effective at getting the word out, many organizations will step up to provide resources and expertise.**

- **Program Management:** The Program Manager is responsible for all aspects of the program and should have experience in delivering and managing disaster recovery, business continuity, and emergency preparedness programs.
- **NET Guard Team Coordination:** The Team Coordinator is responsible for recruitment, administration, and oversight of a NET Guard Team or Teams.

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- **Volunteer Management** – The Volunteer Manager is responsible for active recruitment and management of volunteers, maintaining volunteer database, and planning volunteer coverage.
  - **Operations Management:** The Operations Manager is responsible for ensuring the operational capability of the NET Guard Team including volunteer personnel. This function includes responsibility for deployment of the NET Guard team/s in emergencies and coordination with other management team members, partners, and governmental agencies. This responsibility includes establishing adequate procedures to ensure functions are performed in scope and with proper plans for security for the ITC systems and safety for volunteers.
  - **Logistics/Technical Management:** The Logistics Manager is responsible for identifying and managing the movement of equipment for use by the NET Guard Team. This function includes responsibility for procuring and maintaining equipment, and may include equipment training for volunteers.
  - **Training and Exercise Management** – The Training and Exercise Manager is responsible for scheduling and conducting training and exercises for the NET Guard Program.
  - **NET Guard Team Members:** The Team Members are responsible for performing any other ITC-related duties identified as necessary to meet goals and objectives for services.

If deployed, NET Guard teams should follow the Incident Command System as described in the Team organization section (5.4) and functions defined by the Emergency Operations Plan. If the need arises, the Team leader will add new positions and document the position description and requirements. After a deployment or an exercise or as the program grows, update the program with new positions based on lessons learned. When writing a position description, things to consider include:

- **Purpose** - How will the position help your program achieve its mission?
- **Responsibilities** - What tasks will the volunteer complete?
- **Qualifications** - What knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) are required?
- **Accountability** – To whom will the volunteer report?
- **Time Commitment** - How many hours each month, quarter, or year are required to accomplish the job responsibilities?
- **Length of Appointment** - How long will the position be required? Is the job open-ended, or is it a position that is only required during an emergency?

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- **Coordination Required.** – Can the work be done independently, or do the tasks require the volunteer to rely on others in the program (e.g., volunteer communications, program promotion, training coordination)?

#### **6.4.6. Document NET Guard Team Organization**

In this portion of the NET Guard program development plan, document how NET Guard Teams are organized based on the geographic or functional structure defined in Section 5. An organizational chart may be useful in showing the functions of the Teams and the relationship between NET Guard Teams and the NET Guard Program. Documenting each team's functions and the assignment of each volunteer to a particular team is important for volunteer management and team accountability.

#### **6.4.7. Budget and Funding**

Budgeting will include equipment, personnel, and other resources required to accomplish the NET Guard mission successfully. The budget plan lists all costs associated with the NET Guard Program. In addition to equipment and personnel, include line items for expenses like travel, supplies, as well as items like background checks, and office expenses.

A number of different sources –both public and private –can provide funding or in-kind support for a NET Guard Program. However, tight budgets and competition for resources require that programs make a strong case for the resources they need and be able to be specific about the benefits to the community. A critical factor to gaining support for the NET Guard Program is to design a viable plan that meets emergency management and community needs not currently addressed, and clearly demonstrating how the NET Guard Program will fill those needs efficiently and effectively leveraging limited funding with skilled volunteers.

#### **6.4.8. Outreach and Communications Planning**

The program communications and outreach plan should be an integral part of the NET Guard program development. The members of the collaborative planning team are the foundation for initial outreach. The communication plan serves as a guide to the communication and sponsorship efforts throughout the duration of the project. The program communication plan is distinct from the operational communications of the teams.

The grass roots outreach strategy used by Citizen Corps is extremely effective in both recruiting volunteers and spreading the message of the program throughout communities. Although the NET Guard Program will rely on volunteers and community partners with specific skill sets revolving around the ITC industry, the same grass roots efforts are useful to engage the public at large as well as potential government and non-government partners of the NET Guard Program. Working through relationships already established by the Citizen Corps Council and CERT Program can help quickly spread the word about the NET Guard Program.

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For the program to be successful, plan and discuss the types of communication, outreach materials and communication activities needed to support all aspects of the program. Consider recruiting or using an existing volunteer or partner who has a writing, public affairs communication or outreach background. Some Suggestions for communication and outreach include:

- Developing a recruiting message that catches the volunteer's attention, states the need in the community, explains NET Guard and how it will meet the community need, identify who can be a NET Guard volunteer, describe the benefits of being a volunteer and list the NET Guard point of contact.
- Determining the message delivery channels (radio, television, print, social media) that will enable you to reach your target audience(s)
- Creating and/or using materials and templates that explain the NET Guard Program
- Creating and/or using materials and/or templates explaining the volunteering process
- Creating and/or using templates for planning meetings such as invitations, slide presentations, brochures and email campaigns
- Creating and/or using templates for press releases and event announcement templates
- Using partners for guidance and direction on using existing communication and outreach channels,
- Building a website and or social media tools that can serve as both a recruitment tool and a communication platform
- Organizing and conduct recruiting events and activities with groups that may be a volunteer source, including professional organizations, colleges and universities, state volunteer registries, corporations and businesses and community groups

#### **6.4.9. NET Guard Team Activation Plan**

NET Guard teams are locally deployable through emergency operation plans (EOP). Once specific scenarios for NET Guard Program activation are identified, document them in an activation plan. Depending upon the state and local emergency management organizational structure and the structure and functions of the NET Guard Program, activation may come from several different agencies. The activation plan outlines **who** will activate NET Guard and **how** to notify program volunteers in redundant ways such as landline based telephone, cell phone, short message service (SMS) and email. In addition, consider the possibility that, in the midst of a major disaster, a formal call to activate may be delayed or may not be possible until communication is restored. Policy and procedures for self-activation are also required.

The NET Guard Program should also identify and document protocols for potential deployment of the NET Guard Teams outside the home jurisdiction. If the proper mutual aid agreements are developed, NET Guard members can play a valuable role outside of their home jurisdiction. In this case, establish the credentials and protocols necessary with a neighboring jurisdiction.

Deployment procedures should always include accountability and deactivation procedures. Test and document the procedures to terminate an emergency response in advance of a disaster. Plans and steps for demobilization should be in place before deployment; these plans include

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accountability for safety and well-being of volunteers, accountability for equipment, debriefings, and after-action reports.

## 6.5. Volunteer Management

This sub-section outlines the approach to recruiting volunteers, preparing them for service through training and credentialing, and retaining them for long-term service.

### 6.5.1. Volunteer Recruitment

Recruiting qualified ITC volunteers is critical to the success of the program. The process of recruiting volunteers begins with identification of the positions and skills needed. These should be related to the Program's service areas and refined by skills required to perform the functions.

Although there are common ITC skill areas and requirements for volunteer staffing, requirements for each NET Guard Program will likely be different and unique to its location. NET Guard volunteers will be a diverse group and bring a variety of skills and expectations to the team. Volunteer motivations include the desire to provide service to the community, seeking opportunities to use a variety of skills and expertise, social interaction, recognition of accomplishments and more. Effective strategies outlined below will help to recruit new volunteers and avoid common pitfalls regarding recruitment and retention:

- **Develop clear communication on NET Guard Program and volunteer role.** Describe the program mission, operations and the opportunities, expectations, and context of the volunteer. Remember that potential members are considering this volunteer job and interviewing you and your team just as you are interviewing them.
- **Establish Specific Expectations, policies, procedures.** New members need to have a handbook that outlines expectations for meeting attendance, functions to be performed, skill requirements, basic training requirements, credentialing and background checks, confidentiality requirements, liability, opportunities for advanced service as a team member and other important information. The document should contain applicable policies and procedures, communication protocols, member code of conduct, etc.
- **Be ready with plans to engage volunteers before any recruiting.** One of the most common challenges to retaining volunteers is the result of recruiting volunteers before plans are in place for credentialing, training, exercises and operations. You can recruit a few key volunteers to participate and assist as part of the planning team but recruitment of volunteers for the teams should not start until volunteers can start activities. Retaining volunteers and sustaining a program requires well-organized plans for regular activities that engage volunteers productively in the mission.
- **Consider all areas of expertise.** Not every volunteer must be an ITC expert. A NET Guard Program requires a diverse staff to support much of its operations. Individuals with skills in public communications, accounting, logistics, fundraising, volunteer recruitment and management are critical for a successful program.

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- **Minimize Bureaucracy and Streamline Paperwork.** Look at the processes involved through the eyes of the people you wish to recruit and simplify it as much as possible. Keep the initial application to a minimum length. Touch on the critical points such as current and past addresses, background information, references, etc., on the first page and include employment, training, education, licenses and certifications, specialized skills, positions of interest, and other documentation on the back of the second page.
  - **Recruit Continuously.** Regular recruitment should be part of the program communication plan. Outreach and recruiting can be a good activity for all members. An in-person presentation by team members to organizations is an effective method for recruiting and for program visibility and increased community support. A letter or material distributed through partner organizations is also effective. Preparing an article for the local newspaper, public service announcements, or a community flyer to canvass for new members may also yield interested candidates. Websites are an excellent way to post program information, volunteer opportunities and answers to frequently asked questions.

#### 6.5.2. Volunteer Application and Documentation

All volunteers should complete an application form to provide basic information and to serve as the base for initial review of capabilities and interests. Basic application information areas include contact information, areas of interest within the NET Guard Program, relevant skills and professional background, emergency response experience, and availability. Since NET Guard functions require credentialing re the required skills, the application should be designed to include requests for information regarding the relevant skills. Some NET Guard pilot programs have used a combination of resumes' interviews and exercises to validate skills.

Additionally, NET Guard Program Managers should consider maintaining a database or tracking system for volunteers. This will allow you to track volunteer hours, availability, update contact information, and have a listing of ITC specialties where volunteers have expertise. Establishing a tracking system early in the NET Guard Program development process will make volunteer management easier as the Program develops. Some of the information you should consider maintaining on volunteers includes:

- Contact information
- Completion dates for NET Guard and emergency response training
- Active/non-active status
- Role within team or program
- Number of service hours
- Completion dates for training and exercises
- Equipment issued
- Abilities and specialties

Tracking volunteer activities also allows for program updates and reports. NET Guard volunteers dedicate their time and energy to serving their community and once they are trained, they become

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a valuable community asset. Volunteer programs track volunteer hours as a measurement of the value of services contributed by the program. NET Guard members can save a jurisdiction thousands of dollars or enhance other programs at little or no cost.

### **6.5.3. Credentialing and Screening Volunteers**

Credentialing is the evaluation and documentation of an individual's current certification, license, or degree; training and experience; and competence or proficiency to meet nationally accepted standards, provide particular services and/or functions, or perform specific tasks under specific conditions during an incident. Additionally, screening may include background checks, past employment verification, or other verifications.

**The credentialing and screening process typically should include the following actions:**

- Reviewing Application
- Interviewing prospective volunteers
- Checking references
- Performing criminal and other background checks
  - Methods to be used for background checks may include:
    - Background Investigation Form for law enforcement
    - Citizenship verification
    - Identifying and verifying source documents
    - Taking a photograph
    - Obtaining fingerprints
    - Verifying affiliation with other emergency response groups
- Validating volunteer capabilities
- Documenting the screening process

**Criteria for selection of applicants should include:**

- Possession of specialized skills, experience, licenses and/or certifications
- Related volunteer experience
- Completion of required training
- Satisfactory check of references, background, and character references

Define the procedures for each of these activities and document them so that it is understood who is responsible for performing each activity, and who has final authority to make decisions regarding whether or not to accept a volunteer.

**Considerations for the credentialing and screening of NET Guard volunteers include:**

- 
- Ensuring consistent policies and procedures are followed throughout the volunteer screening and selection process
  - Considering appointing a committee to screen or select volunteers
  - Planning for the length of time it takes to complete the credentialing process and what the volunteers may and may not do during this time.
  - Defining a procedure to ensure that each team member is properly credentialed verifying that all team members have proper credentials.
  - Considering obtaining support in the credentialing process from Citizen Corps or InfraGard or local law enforcement and ensure that the credentialing process is both standardized and thorough.

One of the biggest challenges in emergency management volunteer programs is retaining qualified and trained volunteers when no emergencies are occurring. In order to minimize the effects of the down time, develop strategies for regularly engaging and retaining volunteers. Further information on volunteer retention is available in Section 8.

#### **6.5.4. Volunteer Liability and Risk Management**

FEMA has learned from Citizen Corps Councils, volunteer program managers, and volunteers that liability is a significant concern and a potential barrier to volunteer involvement in emergency services. The Citizen Corps Volunteer Liability Guide, available from the Citizen Corps website ([www.citizencorps.gov](http://www.citizencorps.gov)) outlines the liability laws pertaining to emergency response volunteers. Liability for the program and volunteers includes diverse concerns that should be reviewed by local jurisdiction counsel for appropriate procedures for all jurisdiction programs that engage volunteers.

Address the liability concerns as part of the program development plan and include development of liability waivers. Although the scope of NET Guard volunteer functions and procedures exclude volunteer access to proprietary systems and minimizes or excludes access to private or personal data, the NET Guard program manager should seek guidance from counsel to ensure that procedures meet security standards. Volunteers should be trained on these standards; confidentiality agreements and/or releases may also be required.

As part of risk management, procedures and training should focus on the safety of all volunteers, particularly in disaster response. Have all legal matters reviewed by counsel for the organization sponsoring the NET Guard Program.

### **6.6. Equipment and Facilities Management**

The amount and kind of equipment and facilities necessary for a NET Guard Program varies and depends on factors such as:

- The NET Guard Program's service areas

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- The size of the community in which the NET Guard Program operates
  - The existence of other agencies or groups whose efforts may overlap those of the NET Guard Program
  - NET Guard partner resources

Obtaining equipment and facilities to meet the needs of the NET Guard Program will likely be a process that involves coordination with partners and many different groups or agencies. NET Guard Programs will work with partners and use a variety of strategies and sources for acquiring needed resources including:

- Using donated surplus equipment
- Arranging for dual use of government equipment for non emergency use and deployment during emergencies
- Establishing a Mutual Use Agreement (MUA) with another organization or company
- Using equipment provided by the organizations receiving services
- Seeking grant funding or other forms of private financial support to purchase equipment

## **6.7. Training and Exercise**

Volunteers should receive a comprehensive training program outlined in the program development plan. Important components include:

- An initial orientation program that provides an understanding of NET Guard and an overview of local emergency management programs
- An understanding of the core competencies needed for the position held and the chain of command (emergency management, NIMS and ICS)
- Assistance in preparing and documenting a personal and family preparedness plan
- An explanation of the procedures for assignment, activation, reporting, and deactivation

### **6.7.1. Resources Needed**

Most of the required resources for effective NET Guard training are readily available through the Citizen Corps ([www.citizencorps.gov](http://www.citizencorps.gov)) or FEMA websites ([www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)). The Emergency Management Institute (EMI) ([training.fema.gov](http://training.fema.gov)) provides more detailed training on their website.

### **6.7.2. General Emergency Response Training**

The Emergency Management Institute (EMI) offers Incident Command System (ICS) classes on a range of topics that are critical for understanding the NIMS. The courses listed below are recommended for all managerial level NET Guard program and team members:

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- **ICS-100** – This course offers an introduction to the Incident Command System introduces the Incident Command System (ICS) and provides the foundation for higher level ICS training. This course describes the history, features and principles, and organizational structure of the Incident Command System. It also explains the relationship between ICS and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).
  - **ICS-200** – This course enables personnel to operate efficiently during an incident or event within the Incident Command System (ICS). ICS-200 provides training on and resources for personnel who are likely to assume a supervisory position within the ICS.
  - **ICS-300** – This course covers organization and staffing, organizing for incidents and events, resource management, and air operation.
  - **ICS-400** – This course focuses on large single-agency and complex multi-agency/multi-jurisdictional incident response. The course addresses area command and staff issues as well as the planning, logistical, and fiscal considerations associated with complex incident management and interagency coordination.
  - **ICS-700** – This course introduces NIMS and explains the purpose, principles, components, and benefits of NIMS. The course also contains a "Planning Activity" which gives members an opportunity to complete some planning tasks during this course.
  - **ICS-800** – This course introduces The National Response Framework, (NRF), and describes how the Federal Government will work in concert with State, local, and tribal governments, and the private sector to respond to disasters.

### 6.7.3. NET Guard-specific Training

In addition to the ICS classes, EMI offers other courses that relate closely to the mission of the NET Guard Program, including:

- **IS-802** – As part of the NRF, Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) are primary mechanisms at the operational level used to organize and provide assistance. This course introduces Emergency Support Function (ESF) #2 –Communications.
- **IS-102** – This course covers deployment basics for FEMA response partners and helps to prepare FEMA response partners for deployment to a domestic incident.

### 6.7.4. Exercises

After the NET Guard Program is in place, conduct exercises to test its effectiveness. Guidelines on how to conduct exercises are available through the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP). HSEEP is a capabilities and performance-based exercise program that provides a standardized methodology and terminology for exercise design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. The list below outlines the four basic types of exercises NET Guard Programs are most likely to participate in.

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## **Tabletop Exercise**

The tabletop exercise is the easiest for a NET Guard Program to conduct. A tabletop exercise simulates an emergency situation in an informal, stress-free environment. The participants gather around a table to discuss general problems and procedures in the context of an emergency scenario. The focus is on training and familiarization with roles, procedures, or responsibilities.

## **Drills**

A drill is a coordinated, supervised activity usually employed to test a single specific operation or function within a single entity (e.g., a NET Guard Team team conducts a drill for testing long-range wireless data communication).

## **Functional Exercises**

The functional exercise simulates an emergency in the most realistic manner possible, short of moving real people and equipment to an actual site. As the name suggests, its goal is to test or evaluate the capability of one or more functions in the context of an emergency event. Functional exercises usually take place in a classroom or Emergency Operations Center and include various forms of message traffic (written, telephone, radio). Although these exercises attempt to recreate a realistic environment, they do not involve any real time response. responders or emergency officials responding to an incident in real time).

## **Full-Scale Exercises**

A full-scale exercise is an exercise that takes place on-location using as much equipment and personnel as possible that would be used in a real event. The full-scale exercise combines the interactivity of the functional exercise with a field element. It differs from a drill in that a drill focuses on a single operation and exercises only one organization.

## **6.8.Policies and Procedures Development**

Written policies and procedures are necessary so that the entire team is aware of them, new members can learn them easily, and all can refer to policies for guidance. The documentation listed below relates to the work done up to this point in the NET Guard program development plan:

- Acceptable participation in the program
- Maintaining active status
- Standards of behavior
- Following the team chain of command
- Deferring to professional responders
- Maintaining any equipment issued
- Communication and Recruitment

- Volunteer Credentialing and Screening
- Liability Policy
- Training and Certifications
- Procurement
- NET Guard membership database development and maintenance
- Activation and Deployment
- Equipment setup in an emergency situation
- Collaborative and cooperative relationships with other agencies

Having well -written and tested policies and procedures ensures that when the NET Guard Teams are activated, it will be done smoothly, professionally, and successfully.

### 6.9. Defining How to Evaluate the Program and Measure Success

The performance of the NET Guard Program should be regularly reviewed against its goals and objectives, and include training, deployment exercises, funding, communication, and volunteer recruitment. Define measurable objectives for any aspect that can be quantified and reviewed. Like the rest of the NET Guard plan, the goals section should be dynamic and updated regularly to reflect any changes that could potentially impact the Program.

### 6.10. Tools to Help Develop the Program Development Plan

Tool Kit items relating to this section of the NET Guard Guide are listed below.

Title or Description	File Name	Public/ Private
Citizen Corps Volunteer Liability Guide	Citizen Corps Volunteer Liability Guide.pdf	Either
City of Austin Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement	City of Austin Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement.pdf	Either
City of Austin Liability Waiver	City of Austin Liability Waiver.doc	Either
City of Austin NET Guard Budget	City of Austin Budget.xls	Either
City of Austin NET Guard Volunteer Policy	City of Austin NET Guard Volunteer Policy.pdf	Either

Colorado Emergency Preparedness Partnership Goals, Overview, and Working with NET Guard	Colorado Emergency Preparedness Partnership.pdf	Private
CNCS and HandsOn Network Handbook on Volunteer Management	Hands On Network and CNCS - Volunteer Management Guide.pdf	Either
Credentialing - Information Systems Manager/Network Manager/Computer Specialist Job Aid	InfoSysMgrNetworkMgrComputerSpecJobAid.pdf	Either
Credentialing - Logistics and Communication Center Manager Job Aid	Log_CommunicationsCenterManagerJobAid.pdf	Either
Credentialing - Spectrum Manager Job Aid	SpectrumManagementSpecialistJobAid.pdf	Either
Credentialing - Communications Manager Job Aid	CommunicationsRequirementsManagerJobAid.pdf	Either
Credentialing - Communications Unit Leader Job Aid	CommunicationsUnitLeaderJobAid.pdf	Either
Credentialing - FEMA National IT Cadre Credentialing Plan	FEMA National IT Cadre Credentialing.ppt	Public
FEMA ESF #2 Overview PowerPoint	FEMA - ESF2 Communications Briefing.pptx	Either
Public/Private Alliance Unit (FBI) – InfraGard National Members Alliance	Public-Private Alliance Unit (FBI) InfraGard National Members Alliance.ppt	Either
NET Guard Charter (Hamilton County, IN Pilot).doc	NET Guard Charter (Hamilton County, IN Pilot).doc	Either
NET Guard Job Aid for Network Administrator.docx	NET Guard Job Aid for Network Administrator.docx	Public

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## Section 7. Implement the Program

### 7.1.Overview

After developing the Program Plan, the next step is to recruit, train, and credential all NET Guard team members so they have the validated knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform the tasks identified in the plan. Team members will also need to understand the principles of disaster management and participate in joint exercises so that they can effectively work within the local emergency management structure.



### 7.2.Implementing the Program Development Plan

Implementing the NET Guard program development plan outlined in Section 6 operationalizes the plans, procedures, partnerships, and documents that you created. Opening the NET Guard Program to volunteers typically begins by promoting a kickoff meeting using the channels identified in the program development plan. Potential volunteers are invited to attend the meeting where the Program Manager or a designee outlines the NET Guard Program, roles, responsibilities, and conditions.

It is important to have a completed program development plan and have a schedule of NET Guard activities prior to scheduling the kickoff meeting. These activities can include trainings, guest speakers, exercises, organizational meetings, or other activities. Keeping volunteers engaged in performing meaningful tasks is critical to long-term sustainability. If volunteers feel under-utilized or believe that the NET Guard Program is not active, they will likely cease to participate in the Program. Once this occurs, it is very difficult to have them return. Worse yet, they may discourage friends and coworkers from participating.

### 7.3.Promoting the Program and Scheduling a Kickoff Meeting

Once the program framework and management policies are established, begin recruiting volunteers from the resources and strategies laid out in the program development plan.

Use the partnerships formed during the program development to distribute information about the kickoff meeting. Successful recruiting has occurred from the CERT Program, Medical Reserve Corps, local amateur radio community, and professional organizations that deal with technology,

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emergency management, or business resiliency issues. Other places to advertise about NET Guard include public access television, newspapers, and especially the internet, including email distribution lists, social media, and announcements on your housing organization's website. Be sure to include in your outreach efforts a general overview of NET Guard, a list of the types of positions within your NET Guard Program, requirements to become a volunteer, the time and location of the meeting, and contact information for follow-up.

The HandsOn Network/CNCS Volunteer Management Guidebook provides several tips on communicating with volunteers including:

- Be prompt in your response to phone calls/e-mails. Return volunteer calls or e-mails within 24 hours
- Be thorough in your explanation of the volunteer duties. Volunteers will be more likely to sign up if they know exactly what they will be doing, and they will know what to expect at the project
- Use this opportunity to teach potential volunteers about the issue area, the community service organization they will be serving, and the potential impact of the project
- Use their names often; this helps develop a personal connection
- Keep the commitments you make. People will not support you if you don't provide information requested, address issues they bring up, and/or miss scheduled appointments

## **7.4. Hosting the Kickoff Meeting**

Kickoff meetings for NET Guard Programs have had up to 75 people attend. The meeting should take between 2-3 hours at most to introduce the NET Guard Program and answer any questions the attendees may have about the program.

Ideas on what to cover during the Kickoff Meeting (adapted from the HandsOn Network/CNCS Volunteer Management Guidebook) include:

- Introduce yourself (or another staff person, partner, or volunteer) as the NET Guard Program Manager. Give attendees an opportunity to introduce themselves briefly and their interest in the program
- Thank attendees for interest in volunteering.
- Pass around a sign in sheet to allow volunteers to "check-in." Be sure to include a space for their email, phone number, and any other contact information such as radio call sign. Consider issuing nametags to allow volunteers to get to know each other
- Provide information on the national NET Guard Program
  - History of NET Guard
  - What is a NET Guard Team?
  - How NET Guard interacts with the emergency response system and the community

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- Provide information about the local NET Guard Program
    - The NET Guard mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the NET Guard Program
    - A description of the local program organization (determined by local program)
    - How teams work (local activation protocol, team communication method (determined by local program)
    - The program's expectations of the volunteer
  - Introduce volunteers to the standards, policies, and procedures of the NET Guard Program
  - Describe NET Guard program and team roles and give potential volunteers an opportunity to ask questions and clarify options for service
  - Distribute a NET Guard volunteer application form during the meeting
  - Inform volunteers how they will be contacted regarding any additional interviews or for discussions regarding assignments
  - Provide information on the next meeting, project, or training, and ask who will be attending. Ideally, provide the date and time, address, directions, anything volunteers should bring or do to prepare for the meeting, and parking information. If next meeting is not scheduled, inform the volunteers how this information will be provided (email, posted on website, etc.)
  - Tell volunteers whom to contact if they have a change in plans
  - Thank the volunteers for their time and participation

## 7.5. Follow-Up Activities including Trainings and Tabletop Exercises

It is critical to keep volunteers engaged in regular, meaningful activities and recognize them for their efforts. Retaining volunteers is essential to the success of your NET Guard Program. From beginning to end, volunteers need to feel good about themselves and their service.

Meaningful planned activities are key. The program development plan you created should include a list of trainings, exercises, and activities for NET Guard volunteers. An important concept to note is to “plan a step ahead.” In practice, this means knowing the agenda for the following meeting, training, or activity before announcing it to the NET Guard volunteers. Some tips for scheduling future events include:

- **Include the volunteers in planning activities.** Bring a tentative training, meeting, and activity schedule to the first meeting. Ask the participants if the schedule meets priorities and is feasible. Ask for suggested activities and recommendations for sources for training or exercises. Identify partner organizations and volunteers with expertise and skills in ITC-

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related topics such as amateur radio technology, networking, or GIS technology they can provide for the team

- **Have a Reason to Meet** - Always have a reason or objective for your meeting
- **Set an Agenda** - Having an agenda in advance to send to volunteers will improve attendance and contribute to an effective and productive meeting. Make sure that all of your meetings have a printed agenda
- **Keep It Short** - Keep your meetings short and to the point. An agenda and one or two objectives will help, but always be aware of keeping to the planned meeting time. Stay on task and, if you get done early, thank them and let them go home! Unless you are doing some major training or exercise, avoid going more than 2 hours
- **Offer Food and Drinks** – Plan to provide refreshments during meetings. Most volunteer groups are ready to organize to take turns bringing light refreshments
- **Continue to Offer Training** -Expand beyond just the basic NET Guard and FEMA emergency response training. Consider working with the local CERT Program to encourage NET Guard volunteers to become CERT-trained. Additional emergency response training is obtainable by working or partnering with organizations such as the local Red Cross chapter, local Voluntary Organizations in Disaster (VOAD), or hospital. Organizations that coordinate virtual volunteers also provide opportunities for training in social media or web-based and new technology response tools.
- **Schedule Tabletop Exercises, and NET Guard Participation in Community Exercises** -- Exercises are a great way to test your team's capabilities and practice new skills or services in new situations. Try to schedule at least one exercise per year, preferably two. Exercises are also a great way to get recognition for your team. Consider invitations to local media and do a write-up on your website, in a newsletter, or in a newspaper or magazine  
Section 9 of the NET Guard Program Guide covers Program Evaluation, of which a major component are exercises.

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## 7.6.Tools to Help Implement the NET Guard Program

Tool Kit items relating to this section of the NET Guard Guide are listed below.

Title or Description	File Name	Public/ Private
CNCS and HandsOn Network Handbook on Volunteer Management	Hands On Network and CNCS - Volunteer Management Guide.pdf  <a href="http://www.handsonnetwork.org/nonprofitgov/toptools">http://www.handsonnetwork.org/nonprofitgov/toptools</a>	Either
FEMA Course Manual for IS 244, IS-244 Developing and Managing Volunteers	FEMA - IS244A Course Manual.pdf	Either

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## Section 8. Sustain the Program

### 8.1. Overview

Once the NET Guard Program is implemented, resources and care are required to ensure that the NET Guard Program can be sustained long term and deployed in the event of an emergency. Sustainability is challenging and requires consistent support and collaboration with partners.



### 8.2. Ongoing program management and administration

A solid management team is important in growing and sustaining a program. Concepts that can help with program management include:

- Using dedicated volunteers to fill important team management roles
- Having each team member be responsible for specific aspects of the program
- Using cross-training and rotations to ensure that there is continuity and the team is not dependent on any one member.
- Engaging volunteers in program marketing to recruit new volunteers and build strong public and private partnerships

### 8.3. Maintaining and Building New Public and Private Partnerships

Partnership building – with both public and private groups or agencies – is an ongoing process. Changes in government agencies and partner organization leaders or contacts are almost inevitable; be aware of any changes in personnel that occur and bring the new personnel into the NET Guard Program’s partnership as early as possible. Changes in staff very often mean changes in policies and priorities, so maintain regular communication. When there are changes, work with outgoing contacts personally to introduce the Program to the incoming contacts to help ensure that NET Guard continues to be a priority. Make sure to promote the benefits of the partnerships to new contacts and to retain agreements for sharing resources. This type of relationship building should exist on all governmental levels that the Program deals with – local, state, and federal. The stronger the relationships with these agencies, the more success the Program will have in sustaining the NET Guard Program.

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The same is true for maintaining private partnerships. Besides the challenges of personnel changes, be aware of and in tune with shifts in corporate culture that can impact their priorities for donations and grants that the program previously relied on. Regular communication with the private partners will keep them aware of ongoing changes or new developments in the program and promote an understanding of its importance.

## **8.4. Retaining volunteers and integrating new volunteers**

Retaining volunteers and integrating new volunteers requires continuation of the volunteer management and support functions that begin with the recruitment of volunteers described in earlier sections:

- Program promotion and volunteer recruitment
- Regularly scheduled productive meetings incorporating training and exercises
- Training
- Exercises
- Communication plan with regular program updates and opportunities for information sharing

The program should maintain an active recruiting program – even when the NET Guard Program is “fully staffed”. Ongoing recruiting and training of volunteers will ensure that the program has depth for response capacity and can expand services. It also sends a clear message to the volunteers of the seriousness of the NET Guard Program and the importance of ensuring services delivery in an emergency.

In addition to regular meetings and training, communication is an important tool for retaining and integrating volunteers. Regular communication with the volunteers not only keeps them informed of changes or new developments in the NET Guard plan, but also allows them to share in the challenges and successes. Consider email newsletters or updates and other group-managed information sharing tools.

Training should be an ongoing part of any NET Guard Program. Even after the volunteers have completed all of the training that the NET Guard Program initially requires, regular “continuing education” is a good way to keep volunteers involved and encourage team cohesion. In addition to classroom training, conduct exercises and other projects and activities on a regular basis to ensure that, in the event of a deployment, the volunteer team will function capably.

## **8.5. Tracking and Maintaining Equipment and Other Resources**

Equipment, supplies and other resources are a fundamental aspect of the NET Guard Program. Equipment should be tested regularly, and repaired, upgraded or replaced if it becomes obsolete. The ability to successfully deploy the NET Guard Program in the event of an emergency hinges on

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the resources the program relies on being available and functional. The following organizational tools can help keep track of the equipment and resources required by the NET Guard Program:

- **Equipment and supply inventory log reports** – The frequency of this reporting is dependent on the size and scope of the NET Guard equipment. An inventory of all equipment and supplies that will be in use if the program is deployed, should be conducted on a regular basis and especially when equipment is used or moved.
- **Equipment maintenance log reports** – All stored physical equipment should be tested regularly, and any non-functioning equipment should be replaced or repaired as quickly as is practical. Testing equipment like computers, monitors, routers, cabling and backup generators can be done in conjunction with program exercises or as a separate maintenance task with all repairs and replacements logged in a maintenance report.
- **Partner functionality survey reports** – If the NET Guard Program is dependent on resources provided by a partner (for example, a redundant data line, or a satellite internet connection), conduct regular surveys to determine that nothing has changed on the partner's side that will affect the functionality of the NET Guard Program. Telecommunication providers routinely reconfigure their networks, so it is important that you survey them regularly to determine if any changes they might have made will affect the NET Guard Program.

## 8.6. Optimizing Strategic Partnerships

Once the Program has established strategic partnerships – whether with a public or private entity – look for ways to optimize those partnerships. All partners will appreciate recognition for their contributions. Consider including names of the strategic partners on printed recruiting or informational material newsletters, or other forms of communication to the public. Recognizing the contributions made by the strategic partners demonstrates appreciation and informs the community at large of the partnerships that support the Program.

Once you have established a NET Guard Program team, you will need to continue to solicit broad based community support. NET Guard's success depends upon diverse resources (funds, in-kind donations and volunteers) and optimum use of the services by the community and community organizations.

## 8.7. Tools to Help Sustain the Program

Tool Kit items relating to this section of the NET Guard Guide are listed below.

Title or Description	File Name	Public/ Private
CNCS Toolkit for Program Sustainability, Capacity Building, and Volunteer Recruitment-Management	CNCS - Toolkit for Program Sustainability, Capacity Building, and Volunteer Recruitment-Management.pdf	Either
Medical Reserve Corps Technical Assistance Series - Guidelines for Developing and Managing an MRC Unit	MRC - 5-5_Special_Topics_Guidelines_(FINAL)(1).pdf	Either
Medical Reserve Corps Technical Assistance Series - Sustainability	MRC - 5-3_Special_Topics_Sustainability_(FINAL).pdf	Either
Medical Reserve Corps Technical Assistance Series - Volunteer Retention and Recognition	MRC - 5-4_Special_Topics_Volunteer_(FINAL)(1).pdf	Either

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## Section 9. Program Evaluation and Assessment

### 9.1. Overview

The most basic measurement of success can be defined by answering two simple questions:

- Has the program been implemented as planned?
- Does it work?

Plans for NET Guard Program evaluation should include multiple audiences, approaches and measures for addressing these basic questions.

Emergency exercises or actual deployments are both good methods for evaluating the success of response functions. Hands-on experience and lessons learned are excellent indicators of the program's success, and the after-action review process helps to identify areas for improvement.

Discussions, interviews and surveys provide evaluation from:

- **Organizations receiving services** - regarding their satisfaction with services and areas for improvement
- **Volunteers** - to identify and incorporate their program evaluations and suggestions for improvement as well as to evaluate their satisfaction as volunteers and areas for improvement in volunteer management
- **Partners** - to evaluate the program and the partnerships to identify both program improvements and areas for strengthening or expanding collaboration and partnership relationships



### 9.2. Reevaluate and Reprioritize Needs

Several different factors could make it necessary to reevaluate the original assessment and gap analysis as well as reprioritize or consider previously discounted or overlooked additional needs. For example:

- Additional needs and gaps revealed by disasters or exercises

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- Changes in local state or federal emergency operation plans
  - Expanded Mutual Aid agreements
  - Availability of resources and funding
  - Changes in technology
  - Loss or addition of partners or sponsors

Just as the original development of the NET Guard Program was an iterative process, so is the process of sustaining the existing NET Guard Program. As changes in the community occur, the program should go back through the developmental processes of assessing, validating, refining or revising goals and objectives, building the structure to support each new need, and establishing priorities of new needs within the existing program plan.

### **9.3. Define and Implement Changes**

Once you have identified an unmet need and provided for the structure to satisfy that need, add the functions and supporting program changes to the NET Guard Program plan, policies, and procedures. Defining and implementing these changes helps to ensure that:

- Changes have been communicated to other program personnel
- Resources are available
- Volunteer training and operations are updated
- Appropriate stakeholders have been advised

### **9.4. Define and Document Lessons Learned**

The written NET Guard Program plan should be reviewed regularly and updated. Considerations for updating the plan include:

- Lessons learned from training exercises
- Actual emergencies in the local area
- Information learned from other deployed NET Guard Programs in other areas
- Feedback from new volunteers with different areas of expertise
- Feedback from program partners

Once the NET Guard Program is implemented, revise the plan annually to ensure the program adapts to changes in state, federal, or local policy, and incorporates the lessons learned and areas for improvement.

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## 9.5. Tools to Help with Program Evaluation and Assessment

Tool Kit items relating to this section of the NET Guard Guide are listed below.

Title or Description	File Name	Public/ Private
City of Austin - After Action Report for NET Guard Training Exercise in 2009	City of Austin - After Action Report for Training Exercise - 2009.doc	Either
City of Austin - After Action Report for NET Guard Training Exercise in 2010	City of Austin - After Action Report for Training Exercise - 2010.doc	Either

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