



BERRIEN COUNTY
FIRE CHIEF'S ASSOCIATION
BERRIEN COUNTY, MICHIGAN



Call to Order: 0830-0913

Date: November 13, 2024

PRERSENTATION: None

Old minutes: Old minutes emailed out. Motion to accept old minutes by: DC Gowen. Seconded by: Chief Harper. Motion passed. None opposed.

Treasurer's Report: Starting Balance: \$6068.52. Check 1164: \$76.54 Chief J. Flick; office supplies: Ending Balance: \$5991.98. Motion to accept treasurers report by: Chief Harper. Seconded by: Deputy Director Kazmierzak. Motion passed. None opposed.

Bills: None

Communications:

General Communications:

-Motorcycle Ride: On hold for now. Only two showed up for the last meeting.

-First responder dedication at Lake Twp November 11, 2024, 0900.

-Pager programing: Needed to be completed by November 01, 2024. LT DeLaTorre stated he sent out a message over the BCFCA listserve, no one stated they are not completed. Those that responded said they were ready. Switch to simulcast will start December 02, 2024.

-Emergency Button: Some radios are programed to have an open mic when the EAB is pressed. Open mic is about 10 seconds.

-Thank you to Funeral participants: Chief Myers thanked all departments and personnel that participated in the Eau Claire funeral.

-Congrats to Galien for passage of a fire millage.

New Chief/Visitor: None

Great Lakes Drone: None

EMS: (Medic/S.M.C.A.S./Med Flight /Med Control): None

Dispatch/911: CAD demonstration last month. Meeting tomorrow with county IS team to discuss pricing, access, etc... Follow up meeting with committee after gathering the access/pricing information.

Committees:

Communications: See attached.

CAD: Meeting TBA.

Guideline: Looking for a lawyer to review the mutual aid agreement. LT DeLaTorre asked about the county lawyer that reviewed the BCFCA bylaws. Chief Weich to look for the lawyer's information. Question on if there is a funeral policy/guideline. None currently in place. Something to look into.

BCFA: Next meeting December 04, 2024, STJT station 1. Christmas auction. Gerry working on resource directory updates. Please get your updated to him soon. Discussed the application QR code. If department would like to have their application accessible via the BCFA application QR, get them to Gerry. Gerry has the QR code available to put on your websites, print out and post, ETC.....

Training: The strategies and tactics class will have an in person sessions at Lincoln Twp. for students to attend. Need the blue card questions returned by December 01, 2024, for the grant. FEMA fire grant open until December 16, 2024. Instructor 1 and FO1 filled up. Let Deputy Director Kazmierzak know if you have firefighters interested. BCOEM holding ICS300/400 classes starting in December 2024.

Emergency Management:

MABAS: Nothing, Meeting later today.



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Other Communications:

North Berrien holding a breakfast with Santa and toy drive 0800-1200, on Saturday November 30, 2024.

Niles Fire hosting an EMT class. Updated flier sent out. Grants offered to cover cost.

Bertrand holding Chile supper November 16, 2024.

HB4688 on making minimum staffing for PA312 employees mandatory subject of collective bargaining is scheduled for vote today.

Old Business: Discussion on listserv alternatives. Just use BCC email list. Will need to make sure emails are updated regularly. Plan to use BCC email for now.

Bibles: need more protestant bibles. Look into it.

New Business:

Nominations:

President: Gerry nominated Doug Myers for president. No other nominations.

Vice-President: Doug nominated Jamie Flick for vice-president. No other nominations.

Secretary-Treasurer: Gerry nominated Frank DeLaTorre for secretary-Treasurer.

Brandon nominated Brian Kazmierzak for secretary-treasurer.

No other nominations.

Election in December for secretary-treasurer.

Next Meeting: 0830, December 18, 2024, Lake Township. Fire.

Adjourn: Motion to adjourn by: Chief Weich. Seconded by: Deputy Director Kazmierzak.

None opposed. Meeting adjourned: 0913hrs.

Communications Committee

Discussion Topics:

November 12, 2024

Present: Frank DeLaTorre; Mike Mattix; Allen Weich; Gerry Kabelman; Brian Kazmierzak; Doug Myers; Jamie Flick; Nick Gowen; Caitlin Sampsell

Discussion on CAD. Caitin stated meeting with county IS on Thursday. Will discuss internal plan and pricing. No date set yet for next CAD committee meeting. Discussion on CAD integration with report software. If all agencies used the same report software that may be doable. But there are several different report software being utilized in the county. Discussion on the advantages of having CAD mobile:

Reduce radio traffic.

Press button to go enroute/on scene.

Continuous updates from dispatch.

See previous calls to that location.

Mapping.

Reviewed the guideline for reviewing calls. Only a couple minor changes and will present at the BCFCA meeting tomorrow.

Chief Weich asked about a call from this morning. An unknown accident where the dispatched just sent the PD unit. Caitlin to follow up.

December 02, 2024, we will start the transition to simulcast. Will be transitioning a tower a day. Pagers will need to be switched to transition zone.

Discussion on a UIC video similar to the radio video. Doug working on the script for it. All thought it would be a good idea.

Discussion on EMS not using 11E911 and not moving to 11FG when on fire standbys. Discussion on three agencies that refuse to use the appropriate talkgroups. Brian asked what three agencies. Medic, S.M.C.A.S., and Niles fire, refuse to use 11E911 for medical calls. Niles Fire refuses to use 11F911 for fire calls. What do we do?

Unless someone has a pressing issue, the decision was to hold off the December meeting for the holidays.

NEW TOPICS FOR 2025



AGGRESSIVE STREET SMART FIREFIGHTING - Strategy & Tactics Online

**8 TUESDAY'S 1800-2100 - JAN. 7 - FEB. 25, 2025
24 HOURS - \$300/DEPARTMENT**

In-Person Option at Lincoln Charter Twp. FD!

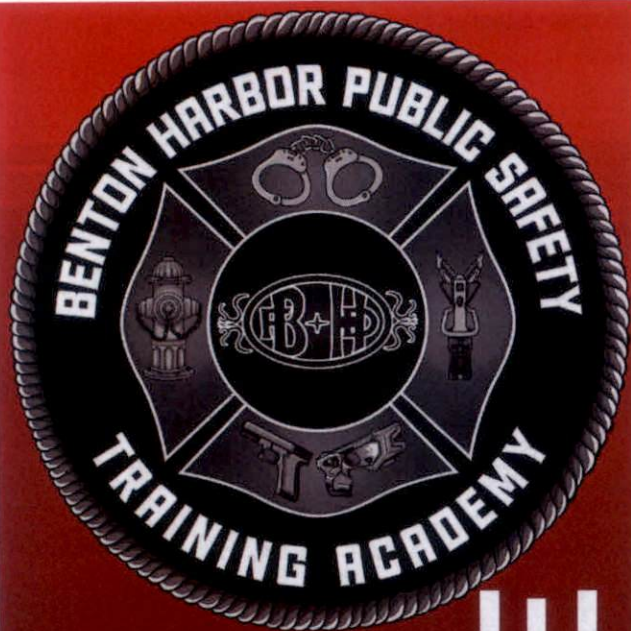
TOPICS INCLUDE:

**Incident Command
MayDay Operations
Commercial Fire Tactics
Residential Fire Tactics
Water Supply, Relay Pumping & Tanker Ops
Foam Firefighting
Firefighter Close Calls
Apparatus Positioning & Aerial Operations**

**ALL TOPICS WILL BE DELIVERED ONLINE AND RECORDED
FOR THOSE WHO CAN'T ATTEND LIVE**

TO REGISTER: bkazmierzak@bhcity.us or 269-443-1027

IMPROVING FIRE SCENE EFFECTIVENESS



2025 TRAINING SCHEDULE

STREET SMART & EXPERIENCED
FIRE INSTRUCTORS DEVELOPING
COMPETENT FIREFIGHTERS
THROUGH CONTEXTUAL
TRAINING!

SW MICHIGAN'S ELITE
FIREFIGHTER TRAINING
ACADEMY

2025 BENTON HARBOR DPS TRAINING ACADEMY COURSES

ONLINE STRATEGY & TACTICS

\$300/Department – 8 Tuesdays
1800-2100 – 1/7/25 – 2/25/25
In-Person Option for 2025 at LCTFD

STRATEGIC COMMAND & THE TACTICAL BOSS

\$25/Person – Saturday 2/1/25
0830-1300 – Todd Center @ LMC

FIRE INSTRUCTOR DEVELOPMENT

\$75/Person – Saturday 2/22/25
0830-1600 – Todd Center @ LMC

IMPROVING FIREGROUND SEARCH – H.O.T.

\$100/Person – Saturday 3/22/25
0830-1600 – Lincoln Twp. FD

INTEGRATED THREAT RESPONSE

Grant Funded – 4/29/25 – 5/1/25
0800 – 1600 – Todd Center @ LMC

BACK TO BASICS – GROUND LADDERS - H.O.T.

\$25/Person – Saturday 4/26/25
0830-1330 – Lincoln Twp. FD – Chief Alan Styles

REALISTIC RAPID INTERVENTION

\$200/Person – Saturday 5/3/25 & Sunday 5/4/25
0830 – 1630 – Lincoln Twp. FD – Scenario-Based

BACK TO BASICS – FIRE PUMP OPERATIONS – H.O.T.

\$100/Person + Books – Wednesdays 1800-2200
5/7, 14, 21, 28/25

SPRING HYBRID FIRE ACADEMY

\$425/Person includes Books – 5/13/25 – 8/1/25
1800-2200 Tuesdays/Thursdays & 0800-1600 Saturdays

FALL HYBRID FIRE ACADEMY

\$425/Person includes Books – 9/30/25 – 12/12/25
1800-2200 Tuesdays/Thursdays & 0800-1600 Saturdays

ADVANCED PUMP OPERATOR – THE WATER THIEVES

\$250/Person – Saturday 9/27/25 & Sunday 9/28/25
0830-1600 – Location TBA – Limited to 30 students!

BLUE CARD CERTIFICATION, HEAVY VEHICLE EXTRICATION & EVOC DATES TBA
SPRING AND FALL FIRE ACADEMY DATES ARE TENTATIVE

FOR MORE INFO & REGISTRATION CALL OR EMAIL
bkazmierzak@bhcity.us
269-443-1027



Benefits of the Blue Card Program

- 1. Injury Reduction** - The Blue Card Command Certification Program standardizes incident command and control, improves fireground safety, and reduces firefighter injuries on the fireground. It is referenced in recent NIOSH LODD Reports.
- 2. Cooperation** - There are instances where Blue Card Certification supported inter-jurisdictional responses between departments that did not share a mutual aid agreement.
- 3. Standardization** - The Blue Card Command Certification Program delivers consistent training that puts everyone on the same page. Our standardized training provides standardization within a department, mutual-aid system, or regional response zone.
- 4. Value** - a Company Officer enrolled in the program receives between 42-50 hours of command training and an additional 12 hours of Continuing Education for \$385.00. That total is \$6.20 per training hour for all participants.
- 5. Continuing Education** - Blue Card Command Certification is the ONLY Incident Command Certification Program presently available to the fire service. Participants are required to maintain their certification with at least 12 CEU hours per year.

Based on retired Fire Chief Alan Brunacini's Fire Command and Command Safety Textbooks, the Blue Card Incident Command Training and Certification Program is designed to manage local NIMS Type 4 & 5 incidents, which account for over 99% of a department's incident activity.

1. Our program is recognized by the International Fire Service Accreditation Council (IFSAC) in Minnesota (2017), and efforts are underway to obtain IFSAC and National Professional Qualification System/Pro Board (NPQS) for the program in Canada.
2. The Blue Card Command Certification Program and assessments have received accreditation from the American Council on Education (ACE).

LEARN



BLUE CARD

818 East Osborn Road • Phoenix, AZ 85014

(855) 872-5822

www.bshifter.com • trainingadmin@bshifter.com



BLUE CARD

Advancing & Standardizing
Incident Command





COURSE DESIGN

The Blue Card Command Certification Program is a state-of-the-art training and certification system that uses a blended learning experience of online and in-class simulation training. This remarkable training program provides a solution for Incident Commanders that addresses local Hazard Zone operations.

Key features of Blue Card Command Certification:

- The only actual Incident Command “certification” program available to the fire service
- Designed to instruct, train, evaluate, and certify Fire Dept. Officers that serve in the role of Incident Commander
- A curriculum that defines the best Standard Command Practices for an Incident Commander to manage a local NIMS Type 4 and 5 Hazard Zone
- Transition directly to Provincial or Federally-run incident management systems without delay
- Fully customizable to meet response capabilities
- The program is continuously updated and incorporates the best practices developed through the latest research, including NIST/UL and Don Abbott’s Mayday studies
- Produces Incident Commanders that make better decisions and potentially eliminates the lethal and/or costly mistakes that cause injury, death, and unnecessary fire losses in the local response area.

COURSE OVERVIEW

Some critical aspects of the program include:

- Blue Card Command Training and Certification combines the online program (30-42 hours) and in-class simulation training (24 hours) to build competence among incident commanders.
- The program teaches and evaluates situational awareness.
- The heart of the program rests in the fact that “standard conditions” warrant the use of “standard actions” to have “standard outcomes”.
- Blue Card organizes incident management in a way that keeps it simple, manages the IC’s span of control, and embeds the necessary safety elements to keep Hazard Zone workers safe.

SELF PACED LEARNING

Test Your Knowledge

Review Only Mode Page 24 of 130 24) Test Your Knowl

Scenario Chief Input

You are the first-arriving unit on the scene of an 11,000-square-foot warehouse. The manager of the occupancy says all the employees are out of the building. Please select the most appropriate strategy and IAP for this scenario.

A. Offensive: Perform a fast, aggressive interior attack, conducts a primary search of the fire area and provide vertical ventilation;

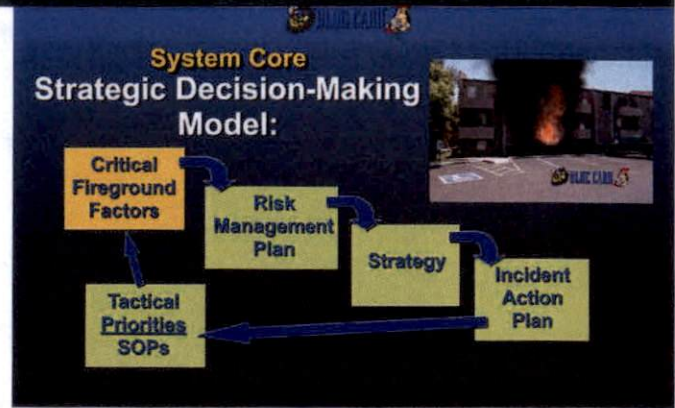
B. Defensive: Write off the involved structure, define the hazard/collapse zone, search and protect the exposures to the north, surround and drown;

C. Marginal: There may be people inside; or

D. None of the above

Right Answer

Required Time Remaining: 00:00



COURSE COMPONENTS

The Blue Card Training and Certification program has four main components. Program rules and deadlines meet the accreditation standards set out by the American Council on Education.

- PART 1:** Completion of the 30+-hour online training program (Cognitive portion of the program)
- PART 2:** Completion of the Simulation Evaluation Session (Manipulative portion of the program)
- PART 3:** Continuing Education (CE) and 3-year re-certification process (Cognitive and Manipulative skill maintenance)
- PART 4:** Blue Card Trainer Licensing and Support Program (optional but recommended)

Transforming Firefighting Leadership:
Blue Card Program offers advanced training for mastering incident command, setting new standards in emergency response and operational efficiency.



BLUE CARD

(855) 872-5822

trainingadmin@bshifter.com

Berrien County Fire Chiefs Association Communications Committee

"Standard Operating Guideline for Radio Traffic Review & Communications Enhancement"

Effective Date: 2024/11/13

Last Reviewed: 2024/11/12

A. Purpose

The purpose of this guideline is to establish a standardized procedure for the Communications Committee to review radio traffic from the fire department and public safety agency response to calls for service. The goals are to identify areas for improvement, ensure compliance with protocols and regulations, enhance operational efficiency, and maintain high standards of communication and public safety.

B. Scope

This guideline applies to all members of the Communications Committee, Dispatch Center personnel, and public safety agencies within Berrien County that are dispatched to calls for service. Neither the Communications Committee nor the Berrien County Fire Chiefs Association has authority over individual agencies, but serves in an advisory capacity to enhance safety and communication effectiveness through structured reviews and recommendations.

C. Definitions

- 1) **Radio Traffic:** All verbal communications transmitted over the radio during a fire department's response to an incident.
- 2) **Review:** The process of listening to and evaluating recorded radio traffic to assess communication effectiveness.
- 3) **Complaint:** A formal concern was raised regarding communication during fire department operations.

D. Criteria for Review

A review of radio traffic will be warranted under the following circumstances:

- 1) **Critical Incidents:** Incidents involving loss of life, injuries to firefighters, or major property damage.
- 2) **Near Misses:** Incidents involving an unintentional incident that could have led to injury, death, or property damage.

- 3) **Unusual Circumstances:** Calls involving hazardous materials, complex rescues, mass casualty events, or multi-agency operations. May also include incidents that involve unique or unprecedented circumstances, such as new technologies, tactics, or procedures.
- 4) **Training & Development:** Calls that highlight areas for improvement in radio communication training or protocols.
- 5) **Complaints or Concerns:** Complaints or concerns submitted by fire personnel, other agencies, or the public regarding radio communication, or at the discretion of the Communications Committee.
- 6) **Communication Errors:** Suspected breakdowns or inefficiencies in communication during an incident.
- 7) **Regulatory Compliance:** Ensuring adherence to federal, state, and local communication regulations.
- 8) **Legal or Ethical Issues:** Incidents involving potential legal or ethical concerns related to radio communications, such as privacy violations or inappropriate language.
- 9) **Routine Quality Checks:** Randomly selected calls for service to evaluate ongoing communication effectiveness.

The committee will use its discretion to determine whether a particular incident warrants review based on the criteria listed above and the overall goal of the review process.

E. Review Process

1) Requesting a Review:

- Reviews may be initiated by the Communications Committee, the Dispatch Center, the Chief Officer (or an authorized representative) from a public safety agency when any of the above criteria are met, including in response to specific complaints.
- A formal request should be submitted in writing, specifying the incident and reason for the review (see page #5).

2) Obtaining Audio Recordings, Information, & Context:

- The Dispatch Center will provide the Communications Committee with the relevant audio recordings as soon as possible after the request is made.
- When possible, members of the Communications Committee may participate in or receive summaries from incident debriefings and/or interview personnel involved in the incident. This approach allows the committee to align its radio traffic review with the broader context of the incident and better understand any on-the-ground challenges that may have influenced communication.

3) **Reviewing the Audio:**

- The Committee will listen to the radio traffic as a group, assessing:
 - **Clarity and Intelligibility:** Whether communication is clear and understandable.
 - **Timeliness:** Whether communications are timely and appropriate for the situation.
 - **Protocol Adherence:** Whether established radio protocols and procedures are followed.
 - **Coordination and Collaboration:** Whether there is effective coordination between fire units, dispatch, and other agencies.
 - **Public Safety Impact:** Whether the communication contributed to public safety and the successful resolution of the incident.
- **Specific issues to look for include:**
 - **Misunderstandings:** Instances where messages were misinterpreted or misunderstood.
 - **Delays:** Any delays in communication or response times.
 - **Protocol Violations:** Non-compliance with radio procedures.
 - **Operational Inefficiencies:** Situations where communication may have caused operational delays or issues.

F. **Complaint Handling and Documentation Process**

- 1) **Complaint Submission:** Complaints related to communication issues during fire department responses may be submitted by members of the Berrien County Fire Chiefs Association.
- 2) **Review and Investigation:** The Communications Committee will document the complaint and initiate a review of the relevant radio traffic and any other pertinent information.
- 3) **Report Preparation:** A written report will be prepared within 90 days of a written request for review summarizing the review findings, including identified communication strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. Audio files may be included when available.
- 4) **Report Distribution:** The report and audio copy will be sent to the department in question, the Berrien County Fire Chief's Association, and other involved parties. (See "Communications Review Report" after page 5 of this document).
- 5) **Recommendations:** The report will include recommendations for improvement to address the identified issues.

G. Follow-Up Actions

1) Implement Recommendations:

- The Communications Committee will work with public safety agencies and the Dispatch Center to implement any necessary improvements in communication practices, protocols, or equipment.

2) Training and Education:

- The Committee may recommend additional training or education for emergency responders to enhance their radio communication skills.

3) Incident Debriefing Integration:

- The review findings may be integrated into post-incident debriefings to provide real-time feedback and identify immediate opportunities for improvement.

5) Cross-Agency Collaboration:

- The Committee will coordinate with other agencies involved in multi-agency responses to ensure communication protocols are harmonized and effective.

6) Continuous Monitoring:

- The Committee will continue to review radio communications to identify effectiveness of training and areas for improvement.

7) Feedback and Revisions:

- Departments are encouraged to review the recommendations and provide feedback to the committee. The committee will consider this input for any further actions or revisions to the guidelines.

H. Confidentiality

All audio recordings, complaints, and review findings are to be treated as confidential. They should only be shared with individuals involved in the review process or as required by law. When appropriate, information and documentation may be used for training purposes.

I. Approval

This guideline has been reviewed and approved by the Berrien County Fire Chiefs Association on 2024/11/13.

J. Revision History

- 2024/11/13: Initial release.

Request Form for Radio Traffic Review

Date: _____

Incident Number: _____

Incident Location: _____

Date of Incident: _____

Agency Involved: _____

Requesting Agency: _____

Reason for Review: [Please specify the reason for requesting a review, e.g., critical incident, unusual circumstances, complaints, operational issues]

Specific Concerns: [Please provide details of any specific concerns or issues related to the radio traffic]

Relevant Documents: [Please list any relevant documents, such as incident reports, dispatch logs, or other supporting materials]

Contact Information:

- Name: _____
- Title: _____
- Agency: _____
- Phone Number: _____
- Email: _____
- Signature: _____
- Date: _____

Note: Please attach (submit) any relevant audio recordings, transcripts, or other supporting documentation to (with) this form.

Submit this form to the Berrien County Fire Chiefs Association Executive Board

Please refer to the **Standard Operating Guideline for Radio Traffic Review** for additional information and procedures.

**Berrien County Fire Chiefs Association
Communications Committee**

Date: [Date]

To: [Chief/Director's Name] [Department Name]
From: The Berrien County Fire Chief's Communication Committee
Re: [Complaint Description]

Dear [Chief/Director's Name],

The Berrien County Fire Chief's Communication Committee was tasked with investigating a complaint regarding communication issues during a fire department response. Our goal is to improve communication practices and enhance responder safety within our county.

Complaint Description:

[Briefly describe the complaint.]

After careful review, our committee has identified the following areas for improvement:

1. **[Recommendation 1]**
2. **[Recommendation 2]**
3. **[Recommendation 3]**

We believe that implementing these recommendations will help to address the issues raised in the complaint and improve overall communication effectiveness.

We encourage you to share your thoughts and suggestions regarding these recommendations. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require further assistance or have any questions.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Frank DeLaTorre
Committee Chair
Communications Committee
Berrien County Fire Chief's Association



City of Niles Fire Department

Emergency Medical Technician

WHAT: This Michigan Department of Health and Human Services-approved course, taught by Instructor Coordinators from Niles Fire Department, will provide fundamental working knowledge for the Emergency Medical Technician. Topics covered include: Med-legal aspects, basic anatomy, patient assessment, basic life support, pre-hospital care of medical emergencies and trauma, extrication, and more. Persons successfully completing this course will be eligible for National Registry Exam & State licensing.

PREREQUISITES:

1. 18 years of age (or be 18 prior to licensing exam)
2. Current CPR Certification within 6 months
3. First Aid training desirable
4. Negative TB skin test or chest x-ray within one (1) year of ending date of class
5. Proof of Hepatitis B vaccination or signed declination form

COST: Free

INSTRUCTORS: Dan Tackett, Paramedic I/C
Bill McAllister, Paramedic I/C
Evan Albers, Paramedic I/C

WHERE: Niles Fire Department
1345 E. Main St.
Niles, Mi 49120

WHEN: November 2024

DATES: Winter Class 12/3/2024 to 5/1/2025 T/TH 1800-2200, S 0900-1300
Spring Class 5/13/2025 to 9/26/2025 T/TH 1800-2200. S 0900-1300

REGISTRATION: Your application must be received no later than December 1st, and adequate enrollment must be insured in order to conduct the course and a maximum of 12 per class. Admission is on first-come, first-serve basis. You will be notified to ensure your enrollment. All class fees are covered by a grant. (does not include National Testing fees or State licensure fees). All Class are Pending State Approval.

QUESTIONS: Daniel Tackett at (269)591-0966, Bill McAllister at (269)591-1702, or Evan Albers at (269)876-6170



TRAINING ANNOUNCEMENT

Announcement Date: Nov 5, 2024

bcoem@berriencounty.org, (269) 983-7111 x 4915

ICS 300 Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents

Date: DEC 10 - 12, 2024 **Times:** 8:00AM – 5:00PM

Registration Deadline: NOV 26, 2024 **Costs:** \$0.00

Location: Berrien County Emergency Operations Center
2100 E Empire Ave, Benton Harbor, Michigan ([Google Map Link](#))

Description: This course provides training on and resources for personnel who require advanced application of the Incident Command System (ICS). This course expands upon information covered in the ICS-100 and ICS-200 courses. The course objectives are to describe how the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Command and Management component supports the management of expanding incidents and describe the Incident/Event Management process for supervisors and expanding incidents as prescribed by the ICS. Also covered is the implementation of the Incident Management process on a simulated Type 3 incident and development of an Incident Action Plan for a simulated incident.

NOTE: The maximum class size is 28.

Target Audience: Workers who may assume a supervisory role in expanding incidents or Type 3 incidents.

Prerequisites:

- Must Complete ICS-100, ICS-200, IS-700, and IS-800
- **All prerequisite certificates must be uploaded to your MI-TRAIN account** in advance of the course so we can verify them. If the prerequisite certificates are not available you will be withdrawn from the course. Complete by Dec 02, 2024. Help? [ICS Prerequisites Upload Video](#)

Cost

- \$0.00 Tuition
- Travel, lodging, and meals are the responsibility of the student and/or their agency.
- OT, if incurred, is also the responsibility of the student's employer.

Point of Contact: CPT Rockey Adams: 269-983-7111 x4916 radams1@berriencounty.org

Registration Link: <https://www.train.org/mi-train/course/1029037/>

Course Number: 1029037

For Help with MiTRAIN, [click here](#).