

McLean County EMA

Probationary Program Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide the requirements and stipulations for the Probationary Program for McLean County Emergency Management Agency.

Individuals serving on the Agency begin their service as a Probationary Member. The purpose of the Probationary Program is to:

1. Develop proficiency in specific functional activities and practices
2. Form a strong working relationship with other status team members
3. Demonstrate commitment to the Agency and support of its goals.

Timeframe

The minimum timeframe for completion of the Probationary Program with the McLean County Emergency Management Agency is six months. Successful completion of the Probationary Program in its entirety as outlines below constitutes the qualification for promotion to the rank of General Staff. A one-year maximum timeframe exists in which the Probationary Member must complete the Probationary Program requirements outlines below. Failure to complete the requirements within one calendar year is disqualified from the Probationary Program. The timeframe and eligibility for re-application as a Probationary Member will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Command Staff.

Member Qualifications

All staff members, regardless of rank or status must:

- Be at least 18 years of age at time of joining on probation.
- Fill out an application and sign an oath.
- Hold a valid driver's license.
- Have no felony charges or convictions or have been convicted of select misdemeanors.
- Undergo a criminal background check.
- Be able to perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodation.

The Administrative and command staff maintain the Probation Program. The policy is supported by all EMA team members and may only be deviated from with authorization from the Director (Chief). The Sergeants of each respective division are charged with executing the training requirements outlined in this policy for all members.

Probationary Program-All Divisions

The following courses have been identified as providing essential, base-knowledge required for every Probationary Member effective January 8, 2024. This policy will affect all members, both current and probationary. Training from other agencies is non-transferable, unless approved by the Director (Chief). The rationale for this is that many training courses contain content that is customized specifically for members of the McLean County Emergency Management Agency. The ranks of Sergeant and above may alter the training course requirements for the respective division, at any time. Below is the list of required training courses to become a full member.

- **Agency Overview**

Covers the history and evolution of Emergency Management in McLean County, the agency's command and organizational structure, membership requirements, membership status classifications, services overview, high-level incident activation procedures, and online sources for collaboration and communication.

Prerequisites: None

- **Operations Security (OPSEC) Indoctrination**

OPSEC addresses protecting sensitive, but unclassified information that can serve as indicators about the McLean County Emergency Management Agency's missions, operations, and capabilities. OPSEC identifies Critical Information (CI) and assigns a classification to it based on several factors. The indoctrination familiarizes staff members with information handling protocols and classification levels. *Prerequisites: Agency Overview*

- **Basic Land Navigation (BNAV)**

This course is designed to provide the training necessary for a searcher to perform essential land navigation tasks during a search mission. This course includes map reading, compass work, and builds upon classroom instruction to allow the trainee to solve a variety of land navigation problems in the field. This course is appropriate for anyone who needs navigational skills for remote locations. The Land Navigation course must be accredited by the Illinois Search and Rescue Council. *Prerequisites: None*

- **Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR)**

The Ground Search and Rescue course is the basic training course for personnel who have responsibilities to respond to a SAR incident as a field searcher. This course provides a broad overview of SAR fundamentals, lost person behavior, scope of SAR operations, SAR resources, search techniques, and search crew field operations. This course is intended for all emergency responders, including police, fire, emergency management, and park and recreation personnel, who might be involved in a search incident during the normal course of their duties. are recommended. The Ground Search and Rescue course must be accredited by the Illinois Search and Rescue Council.

Prerequisites: Basic Land Navigation (BNAV)

- **IS-100, Introduction to the Incident Command System**
 This course 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). If this course has already been completed, a copy of the course certificate or EMI transcript is required for the Probationary Member's file. All independent study (IS) courses can be completed virtually at student's leisure on FEMA's Emergency Management Institute website. *Prerequisites: None*
- **IS-200, Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response**
 This course is designed to enable 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. If this course has already been completed, a copy of the course certificate or EMI transcript is required for the Probationary Member's file. All independent study (IS) courses can be completed virtually at student's leisure on FEMA's Emergency Management Institute website. *Prerequisites: ICS-100*
- **IS-700, Introduction to the National Incident Management System (NIMS)**
 This course introduces NIMS and takes approximately three hours to complete online. It explains the purpose, principles, key components, and benefits of NIMS. The course also contains "Planning Activity" screens giving you an opportunity to complete some planning tasks during the course. The planning activity screens are printable so that you can use them after you complete the course. If this course has already been completed, a copy of the course certificate or EMI transcript is required for the Probationary Member's file. All independent study (IS) courses can be completed virtually at student's leisure on FEMA's Emergency Management Institute website. *Prerequisites: None*
- **IS-800, Introduction to the National Response Framework (NRF)**
 This course introduces participants to the concepts and principles of the National Response Framework. It covers the purpose of the NRF, the response doctrine established by the NRF, the roles and responsibilities of entities as specified by the framework, and how planning is related to national preparedness. If this course has already been completed, a copy of the course certificate or EMI transcript is required for the Probationary Member's file. All independent study (IS) courses can be completed virtually at student's leisure on FEMA's Emergency Management Institute website. *Prerequisites: None*

- **First Aid / CPR**

Valid (non-expired) American Heart Association Healthcare Provider CPR and First Aid certifications must be maintained to gain/continue membership within the Agency. Given the number of individuals within the Agency who seek out higher level medical certifications (i.e. First Responder or EMT), this certification is only offered when an appropriate number of students require [re]certification. Probationary members are expected to seek out this certification within the community if the Agency is not hosting a course within the Probationary Member's timeframe. *Prerequisites: None*

- **Basic Communications**

This course covers basic two-way radio concepts, radio etiquette, net-operations agency-specific communication information, technology-specific topics, and frequency management at small and large incidents.

Prerequisites: Agency Overview, IS-200 (Preferred)

Sponsorship

To build stronger relationships between team members, each Probationary Member is required to identify and obtain a full-member sponsor. Securing a sponsor may be initiated at any point during the Probationary Program but is recommended to be done once each individual Probationary Member feels he/she has demonstrated a consistently high level of proficiency, character, and service.

Each Probationary Member must have a full-member willing to sponsor his/her candidacy for promotion to General Staff. Sponsorship is a component of the Probationary Program that can be in a state of fluctuation until the comprehensive proficiency and practical examinations begin. Because of this, it is imperative that Probationary Members build strong relationships with full-members so that the full-member is comfortable sponsoring and advocating for the Probationary Member throughout the Probationary Program. Any Probationary Member who fails to obtain a sponsor will be given one randomly at the discretion of the Director (Chief) and the Sergeant of the Probationary Member's desired division.

Once a Probationary Member secures a sponsor, the sponsor serves as an advocate for the candidate's promotion throughout the Probationary Program. The sponsor initiates the voting process, facilitates the pre-voting discussions, solicits feedback from the staff members on both strengths and areas of improvement, and works with the Administrative Staff to verify readiness for promotion. The sponsor also serves as a formal mentor and single point of contact to the Probationary Member.