

	<b>WISCONSIN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT</b>	
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	<b>Subject/Description:</b>	Certification Program
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	<b>Approved By:</b>	Greg Engle, Administrator

**POLICY: Emergency Manager Certification Program**

**I. PURPOSE**

The Wisconsin Emergency Manager Certification Program is designed for dedicated professionals who seek certification in the field of emergency management. Anyone who works in a position related to emergency management is eligible to participate in the program, including but not limited to county, tribal, and municipal emergency managers. The training curriculum, while voluntary, provides a well-defined path for candidates who wish to enhance their career development and expand their knowledge, and helps to foster a training culture among emergency management professionals in the state.

**II. REPORTING**

**No Reporting Requirements**

**III. PROCEDURES**

**A. Curriculum**

1. The Wisconsin Certified Emergency Manager (WCEM) program is divided into three levels: Basic, Professional, and Advanced Professional. The Basic and Professional levels each require the completion of a pre-defined list of classes followed by a proctored test. The Professional level has the added requirement of the completion of a mentoring process. The Advanced Professional level also requires demonstrated proficiency in the emergency management field as well as the mentoring of others.
2. The list of prerequisite courses attached is divided between the Basic and Professional levels. It is not necessary to take courses in the order listed.
3. The curriculum builds upon itself, and course prerequisites should be observed.
4. Participants can reasonably expect it to take three to five years to complete the Basic and Professional curriculum.
5. The Advanced Professional level requires additional project management and mentoring requirements. These requirements are outlined in the attachments. Candidates must upload proof of completion for all prerequisite classes to their individual account in the Wisconsin Training Portal at [trainingwisconsin.org](http://trainingwisconsin.org).

**B. Testing – Basic and Professional**

1. After completing the prerequisites for a level, candidates seeking to become a

WCEM will take an examination. When the candidate believes they are ready, they will submit the following to their WEM Regional Office:

- a) A request to take the appropriate level test.
  - b) Proof of completion of prerequisite classes for the appropriate level for review.
  - c) (Professional level only) Submit a completed mentorship packet (see 5005.8.5: WCEM Professional Level Mentoring Guidelines and Worksheet).
  - d) The WEM Regional Office will review the request and supporting documentation for completeness and act upon it (see section D. "Evaluation", below).
2. The test bank for the multiple-choice exam will consist of questions related to knowledge of emergency management topics.
    - a) Basic-level test questions will cover Wisconsin State Statute Chapter 323.
    - b) Professional-level test questions will cover:
      - i. Wisconsin State Statutes Chapters: 59.54, 66.03, 175, 250.042, 251.05, 251.06, 256.12, 256.15, 256.35, and 323.
      - ii. Wisconsin Administrative Code Chapters: WEM 1, WEM 2, WEM 3, WEM 5, WEM 7, WEM 8, DHS 110 (.06, .20, .21, .34, .44), and SPS 330.
      - iii. Wisconsin Comprehensive Emergency Program (CEMP) component plans, including the Wisconsin Prevention Plan and Protection Plan, Wisconsin Hazard Mitigation Plan (WHMP), Wisconsin Emergency Response Plan (WERP), and Wisconsin Recovery Plan.
      - iv. State of Wisconsin Homeland Security Strategy.
    - c) A study guide will be provided for each level.
  3. The test is proctored by the Region Director or the State Training & Exercise Supervisor (or designee). If the candidate does not pass the test, they must wait a minimum of three months between each test attempt. The candidate will be notified within 10 days of taking the test as to whether or not they passed it.

### **C. Exam – Advanced Professional**

1. Candidates seeking to achieve the WCEM Advanced Professional level will submit the following items to their WEM Regional Office:
  - a) A letter requesting consideration for the Advanced Professional program.
  - b) Documentation of a completed major project and accompanying project report. This project should have been completed/implemented no more than 3 years prior to submission. Examples include: a complete revision to a jurisdiction's Emergency Operation Plan, Emergency Response Plan, Hazard Mitigation Plan, or Recovery Plan, where the candidate was the primary author, a debris management plan where the candidate led the development and was the principal author, or an Incident Action Plan or exercise plan for a type 4 incident/exercise where the candidate was the primary author.
    - i. Upon completion of the project, the candidate will author a written project report. Requirements for this report, as well as guidelines for its evaluation, are contained in 5005.8.7: WCEM Advanced Professional Project Guidelines and Evaluation Rubric.
    - ii. Along with this submission, an interactive evaluation of this project will be scheduled. Candidates will make a 15-minute interactive presentation covering the completed project to an evaluation workgroup, with an

opportunity for this workgroup to ask questions about their experience and body of work.

- c) A completed mentoring report covering the candidate's mentoring of a future WCEM Professional level candidate (see 5005.8.6: WCEM Advanced Professional Mentoring Program Guidelines for more information).
- d) Transcripts outlining 800 hours of formal emergency management training and/or academic courses. This training and/or academic coursework must be directly related to emergency management. For example: the WMD module or Incident Management for an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) program will apply, but the EMT class itself will not.
- e) A resume and supporting documentation showing at least 10 years and 10,000 hours of professional work experience directly related to emergency management.
- f) If not already holding a WCEM Professional Level certification, submit a letter requesting equivalency, which outlines professional experience equivalent to the WCEM Professional Level. The WCEM Advisory Workgroup will evaluate and act upon all requests for equivalency (see D.5.b., below).
- g) Candidates who have been granted equivalency, or who have completed the WCEM Professional Level certification prior to 1 January 2024, must successfully complete the current WCEM Professional level test. Advanced Professional candidates will contact their Regional Office to schedule this test prior to submitting their Advanced Professional qualification request.
- h) The WEM Regional Office will review the request and supporting documentation for completeness and act upon it (see section D. "Evaluation", below).

#### **D. Evaluation**

1. In addition to the proctored exam the WCEM Professional and the WCEM Advanced Professional levels each require additional submissions to be reviewed or evaluated prior to the candidate being granted the new WCEM level. This also applies to the WCEM Advanced Professional Level, for those candidates who have not completed the most current version of the WCEM Professional Level.
2. The WCEM Professional Level requires the candidate be actively mentored and provide documentation as well as a brief report summarizing the mentoring experience (see 5005.8.5: WCEM Professional Level Mentoring Guidelines and Worksheet). This will be submitted to the WEM Regional Office along with proof of completion of all prerequisites and the request to take the examination.
3. The WCEM Advanced Professional Level requires several additional prerequisites, proof of which will be sent to the WEM Regional Office along with a request to be evaluated for this level, as well as completion of a major project, which will be evaluated by the Wisconsin Certified Emergency Manager Advisory Workgroup (see D.5., below).
4. Upon receipt of a request and required documentation from a WCEM candidate, the WEM Regional Office will review that request package and act upon it.
  - a) If the request and documentation is not complete, the Regional Office will return that back to the candidate for resubmission, including identification of what prerequisites are missing.

- b) If the request is complete and the candidate is ready for the required test (WCEM Basic and Professional), the Regional Office will either schedule the candidate to take the test in person (which the Region Director will proctor) or contact the WEM Training & Exercise Section to schedule a remote examination of the candidate.
  - c) For WCEM Professional and Advanced Professional candidates, the Region Director will review the mentoring worksheet and report(s) to ensure that all requirements have been satisfactorily met. If there are questions, the Region Director may contact the candidate and/or the mentor or mentee to request additional information.
  - d) Once accepted, the Regional Office will forward the request and all documentation to the WEM Training & Exercise Section, which will maintain a file for each WCEM candidate.
5. The Wisconsin Certified Emergency Manager Advisory Workgroup (see 5005.11 for more information on that workgroup) will review and evaluate all requests for equivalency as well as all WCEM Advanced Professional candidate request packages and project submissions.
- a) This workgroup will meet at least twice per year, typically in June and December, to evaluate and act upon all WCEM candidate requests put before them. All requests for this workgroup to act upon must be completed and submitted in their entirety by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the WCEM Advisory Workgroup's next meeting (by May 15<sup>th</sup> or November 15<sup>th</sup> for the June and December meetings, respectively).
  - b) Candidates with a significant professional background in emergency management (typically those possessing advanced emergency management certifications from other states) may submit a request for professional equivalency for either the WCEM Basic or WCEM Professional levels.
    - i. This request must include a complete transcript of training completed, covering all prerequisites for the requested equivalency level, as well as a letter outlining the candidate's professional career and the reasons an equivalency should be granted.
    - ii. In all cases, the candidate must complete the proctored examination required for the requested equivalency level.
    - iii. The WCEM Advisory Workgroup will review any such requests received and act upon them. The workgroup will contact the candidate directly to communicate its decision, whether the request is accepted, or additional information or requirements are needed.
  - c) WCEM Advanced Professional candidates will be directly evaluated by the WCEM Advisory Workgroup. This evaluation is not merely commonplace, but instead should be the culmination of a decade or more of professional work and achievement within the emergency management field. As such, the process may take a significant time to complete.
    - i. Candidates seeking the WCEM Advanced Professional certification are encouraged to contact their WEM Region Director and/or the WCEM Advisory Workgroup with any questions on the process and to ensure their efforts are complementary to this level of achievement.
    - ii. Prior to initiating or completing the project they intend to submit as a part

of this certification level, candidates should contact their WEM Region Director to discuss that project to confirm that project's subject and scope are appropriate. Likewise, the candidate should provide a project outline to the WCEM Advisory Workgroup; by the completion of their next meeting, that workgroup will provide the candidate suggestions or other feedback to help ensure the project meets the requirements.

- iii. The candidate will submit the completed application package, including a copy of the project (or a report covering the completed project) as well as the presentation materials to be used during the 15-minute interactive presentation no later than May 15<sup>th</sup> or November 15<sup>th</sup> (for the June or December meetings, respectively).
- iv. The workgroup will contact the candidate to mutually agree on a date and time for the presentation. For ease of all involved, this presentation should be conducted virtually. This presentation will be evaluated by the workgroup using the WCEM Advanced Professional Program Evaluation Rubric (see 5005.8.7). The workgroup may call upon subject matter experts to assist in the evaluation of a candidate's submission.
- v. The WCEM Advisory Workgroup will review and approve or deny all applications at this level. Candidates will be notified within 10 days of the review of their approval or denial. All denials will be made via official letter that will include details on their deficiencies. WCEM Advanced Professional candidates that were denied may resubmit no later than May 15<sup>th</sup> or November 15<sup>th</sup> (for the June or December meetings, respectively).

#### **E. Recognition**

1. All prerequisites and testing for each level must be completed by the 31<sup>st</sup> of December for the recipient to receive their certificate at the next annual Governor's Conference on Emergency Management and Homeland Security, usually held in March.
2. Upon completion of a given level, recipients may make use of the accompanying titles: WCEM Basic level (WCEM-B or WCEM-Basic), WCEM Professional level (WCEM-P or WCEM-Professional), WCEM Advanced Professional level (WCEM-AP or WCEM-Advanced Professional); legacy WCEM Recipients may use WCEM or WCEM-P/WCEM-Professional.
3. Recipients will be awarded a certificate at the appropriate level. This certificate is signed by the President of the Wisconsin Emergency Management Association (WEMA), the WEM Administrator, and the Governor. Recipients are typically awarded their certificate at the annual Governor's Conference on Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

#### **F. Professional Development – Continuing Education**

Continuation of training and professional activities following completion of the curriculum is encouraged. It is strongly recommended that Wisconsin Certified Emergency Managers continue to take WEM, DHS, FEMA, and National Domestic Preparedness Consortium (NDPC) courses.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

The Wisconsin Certified Emergency Manager program provides a clear path through the many available training courses and promotes those courses that are relevant to a wide range of emergency management professionals. It provides a clear overall goal, as well as intermediate goals that allow participants to track their progress.

#### **V. ATTACHMENTS**

- A. 5005.8.1: WCEM Certification Levels Chart
- B. 5005.8.2: WCEM Test Study Guide
- C. 5005.8.3: WCEM Basic Level Prerequisite Training Worksheet
- D. 5005.8.4: WCEM Professional Level Prerequisite Training Worksheet
- E. 5005.8.5: WCEM Professional Level Mentoring Guidelines and Worksheet
- F. 5005.8.6: WCEM Advanced Professional Level Mentoring Program Guidelines
- G. 5005.8.7: WCEM Advanced Professional Project Guidelines and Evaluation Rubric