

# What is MERT?

MERT was organized by the Marion County Sheriff's Office Division of Emergency Management to provide reliable communications in the event of loss of conventional communications.

## MERT Members

Members consist of Amateur Radio operators. They fulfill FCC part 97.1-A in providing emergency communications to the county.

If you are interested in becoming a MERT member and/or obtaining your amateur radio license, refer to the contact information found on this brochure.

# Is amateur radio still relevant today?

Amateur radio operators are among the unsung heroes of hurricanes, tornado, fires and floods.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, many cell sites were flooded or lost prime power, and landlines, where available, were often overloaded. Even the 911 system was unable to handle the unusual number of urgent calls.

Amateur radio operators or "hams" were involved in many rescues, providing the only communications link to rescuers.

# What are the requirements to join?



Volunteers must be licensed, be at least 18 years of age and undergo a background check through the Marion County Sheriff's Office.

Shelter operators must also have Marion County School background check.

Applications are available online at [marionso.com](http://marionso.com) or at Emergency Operations Center.





# What does MERT do for our community?

- Meet regularly to train and critique communications exercises.
- Meet weekly on the air. When amateurs check in, they are testing their equipment for reliability and receiving any updated announcements from the Division of Emergency Management.
- Interact with the State Watch Office at the EOC (Emergency Operations Center) in Tallahassee in times of emergency.
- Provide MERT operators at shelters designated by the Marion County Division of Emergency Management.
- Provide amateur radio communications from the Marion County Sheriff's Office Mobile Command Center.



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## MARION COUNTY EMERGENCY RADIO TEAM



# MERT