

Gilbert Fire & Rescue Becomes Autism Certified and Joins Other City Departments to Build a More Welcoming Community

The Gilbert Fire & Rescue Department has achieved the Certified Autism Center™ designation, a certification awarded by IBCCES

GILBERT, AZ, UNITED STATES, April 26, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Gilbert Fire & Rescue Department](#) (GFRD) has achieved the [Certified Autism Center™](#) (CAC) designation, a certification awarded by the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES) to organizations that have trained 80% or more of first responders and public-facing team members in how to better communicate with and respond to autistic and sensory-sensitive community members' needs.



"IBCCES autism training for first responders directly supports the mission of the Gilbert Fire & Rescue Department and with the Town of Gilbert's mission to 'Anticipate, Create, and Help ALL People,'" shared Chief Rob Duggan of GFRD.

Chief Rob Duggan continues, "Autism directly impacts several of our members' families, and hearing their stories shared across our department increased the sense of purpose for the training. Personalizing the impact of autism on our GFRD families also deepens the sense of belonging as members with other nonvisible disabilities feel safer discussing their unique challenges. By completing the training, our crews are better prepared to serve and respond to autistic people in our community."

With recent autism diagnosis rates increasing to 1 in 36 children

(https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/ss/ss7202a1.htm?s_cid=ss7202a1_w#T1_down),

according to the CDC, and the prevalence of sensory needs as well as adults diagnosed later in life, the need has never been greater to ensure first responders have a better understanding of how to approach and assist autistic individuals.

Following Mesa's designation as an Autism Certified City (ACC) in 2019, other departments and communities in the East Valley have also pursued additional training and certification to meet the needs of their communities and share in this effort. GFRD joins Gilbert Police Department and Park and Recreation to help provide more inclusive and accessible services for the whole community.



IBCCES' [first responder](#) training and certification program reviews ways to better communicate, understand and identify individuals who may be autistic and scenario-based training to help avoid escalating situations if possible. For more than 20 years, IBCCES has been a leader in cognitive disorder training and certification for healthcare, education, and corporate

professionals around the globe. IBCCES programs include evidence-based content as well as the perspectives of autistic individuals, alongside other resources, ongoing support, and renewal requirements to ensure there is continued learning and a lasting impact.

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*Myron Pincomb, Board
Chairman of IBCCES*

"We are truly excited to partner with Gilbert Fire & Rescue to help build a safe and inclusive community. This designation shows the department's commitment to providing the best care for autistic individuals and ensuring they can respond appropriately in critical and emergency situations," said Myron Pincomb, IBCCES Board Chairman.

IBCCES also created CertifiedAutismCenter.com, as a free online resource for families that lists certified locations and professionals. Each organization listed on the site has met Certified Autism Center™ (CAC) requirements.

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About IBCCES

Delivering The Global Standard for Training and Certification in The Field of Cognitive Disorders – IBCCES provides a series of certifications that empower professionals to be leaders in their field and improve the outcomes for the individuals they serve. These programs are recognized around the world as the leading benchmark for training and certification in the areas of autism and other cognitive disorders.

About Gilbert Fire & Rescue Department

The Gilbert Fire & Rescue Department (GFRD) consists of more than 250 dedicated and well-trained individuals who are passionately focused on protecting and serving those who reside in and visit Gilbert, Ariz. Its mission is to protect the lives, property, and environment of the people who live, work, play, and travel in Gilbert by:

- Serving with integrity, trust and respect;
- Rapid and effective emergency response;
- Innovative prevention, compliance, and community outreach efforts;
- Maintenance of a highly trained and dedicated work force.

GFRD delivers an all-hazards emergency services model, as well as several community-oriented programs. GFRD is internationally accredited through the Center for Public Safety Excellence and has been awarded Class 1 Public Protection Classification by the Insurance Services Office (ISO).

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