

## Candidate Statement: James Baugh for IAEM Region 5 Secretary

As a dedicated emergency management professional with 15 years of progressive leadership experience in both government and academic settings, I am honored to submit my candidacy for the role of Secretary for the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) Region 5. With my experience in emergency management, public safety, and interagency coordination, I bring a record of service grounded in professionalism, transparency, and a deep commitment to advancing our field.

Having been the victim of a disaster myself, and losing everything to a flood, I know the value emergency managers provide to the communities they serve as well as the uncertainty and clarity that disaster survivors are hoping to gain from their local emergency manager.

Throughout my career, I have consistently demonstrated a commitment to excellence, innovation, and collaboration in the field of emergency management. I currently serve as Training and Exercise coordinator in Cook County, Illinois— One of the nation's largest and most complex jurisdictions. Here I lead the development and implementation of comprehensive training portfolios for our internal staff, and the 134 municipalities we represent. Drawing on my previous experience as a Planner, I review emergency plans, oversee community engagement initiatives, and assist with multi-agency responses. My professional background also includes experience as a public safety educator at a community college, as well as a storied career in the private, public, non-profit, and consulting sectors of emergency management.

My academic credentials include a Master of Science in Emergency Management and Homeland Security as well as a Bachelor of Science in Meteorology. I am a Certified Emergency Manager (CEM), a FEMA National Emergency Management Basic Academy graduate, and an Illinois Professional Emergency Manager (IPEM). Additionally, I am concluding my FEMA National Emergency Management Advance Academy Cohort program. I actively contribute to professional development in our field as an instructor, and I am an active contributor to the IAEM community serving as Vice Chair on the IAEM-USA Weather Caucus. I also serve on the FEMA Region 5 Regional Advisory Council. These roles have allowed me to connect with professionals across the region and country, promoting the best practices and innovative solutions.

My work is rooted in a belief that strong emergency management begins with clear communication and consistent engagement. As Region 5 Secretary, I will apply my experience in drafting operational policies, coordinating stakeholder meetings, and maintaining actionable documentation to ensure that IAEM members stay informed, connected, and supported.

If elected as Secretary, my goals are to:

- Enhance communication and transparency within Region 5 by maintaining timely, accurate, and engaging meeting records and updates.
- Strengthen member engagement and outreach through digital platforms, newsletters, and collaboration tools.
- Support professional development by promoting training opportunities, certifications, and networking within the Region.
- Ensure continuity and integrity of records, helping to preserve institutional knowledge for future leadership.
- Supporting strategic initiatives that strengthen regional resilience and elevate the voices of emergency managers across both urban and rural settings.
- Supporting efforts to highlight member achievements, foster collaboration, and encourage participation across all levels of emergency management professionals in our region.
- Ensure all voices within the emergency management community, and more importantly, the communities in which we serve are represented.

I believe that the role of Secretary is not simply about note-taking—it is about stewardship. Stewardship of our shared knowledge, our goals, and our collective momentum. I am honored to be part of this profession, and I am passionate about advancing the emergency management profession and fostering a vibrant, inclusive community of practice. I bring a strong work ethic, attention to detail, and a deep understanding of the responsibilities of the Secretary role. I would be honored to serve and contribute to the continued growth and success of IAEM Region 5. It would be a privilege to serve as your Region 5 Secretary, and I respectfully ask for your vote and support.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

James Baugh, M.S., CEM®, NEMBA, IPEM, NREMT