

New Jersey Division of Fire Safety

Fire Service Certification Program



Candidate Handbook

FIRE OFFICIAL



New Jersey Division of Fire Safety
Office of Training and Certification
P.O. Box 809
Trenton NJ 08625-0809

January 1, 2023

Dear Certification Candidate,

Welcome to the New Jersey Fire Training Certification Program. The purpose of this manual is to provide you with information to successfully participate in New Jersey Division of Fire Safety Training and Certification testing.

This manual outlines the testing and application process, and provides you with a study guide reference list for the certification level you wish to pursue.

Tests are conducted under the sanction and approval of the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety, Office of Training and Certification with accreditation granted by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (Pro Board) and the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC).

If you are just entering the system, you must first obtain a Division of Fire Safety Identification Number (DFSID) by filling out the *Personal Information Form* found at Attachment 1 of this document or online at <http://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/dfs/forms/>. This will be your personal ID number throughout your time in the New Jersey Fire Service

Good luck and thank you for participating in the New Jersey Fire Service Certification Program.

Captain Gregory S. Kirkham

Supervisor, Office of Training and Certification and the Contractor's Certification & Emblem Unit

New Jersey Organizations and Agencies Involved in the Certification Process

New Jersey State Fire Safety Commission

The State of New Jersey established the Division of Fire Safety (originally a Bureau) thru statute law N.J.S.A 52:27D-192 et seq on November 12, 1983. As part of that law, the New Jersey Fire Safety Commission with mandated representation from various fire agencies and interest groups was created, as well as advisory councils for the major areas of jurisdiction of the Division of Fire Safety. Members of the Fire Commission and their organizations/interest groups are listed below:

Members of the Senate

The HONORABLE LINDA R. GREENSTEIN
State Senator, 14th District

The HONORABLE SAMUEL D. THOMPSON
State Senator, 12th District

Members of the General Assembly

The HONORABLE JOSEPH DANIELSEN
Assemblyman, 17th District

The HONORABLE KEVEN J. ROONEY
Assemblyman, 40th District

Volunteer Fire Organization

KEVIN KRUSHINSKI

Construction Labor Industry

FREDERICK COLLENDER

Fire Insurance Industry

GERARD J. NAYLIS

Municipal Construction Official

CHARLES A. MARIA

New Jersey Fire Prevention & Protection Association

ARTHUR LONDENSKY

Construction Industry

DANIEL DeTROLIO
Assistant Vice President, Hartz Mountain
Industries, Inc.

New Jersey League of Municipalities

RAYMOND HECK

Volunteer Fire Service

KATHLEEN O'LEARY

New Jersey State Volunteer Firemen's Association
CHARLES SIEDENBURG

New Jersey Career Fire Chief's Association
NELSON WIEST

**Professional Firefighters Association of New
Jersey**
RICHARD C. BLOHM

Municipal Fire Protection Subcode Official
GEORGE ALEU

New Jersey State Fire Chief's Association
LAWRENCE D. WOOD

**New Jersey Firemen's Mutual Benevolent
Association**
STEVE O'GORMAN

New Jersey Association of Fire Districts
ARTHUR R. HAYDUCKA

International Association of Fire Chiefs
STANLEY SICKELS

Chief Fire Administrator of a Major City
ARMANDO ROMAN

Fire Suppression Industry
KEVIN P. BELLEW
Sprinkler Fitters Local # 696

New Jersey Apartment Association
PAUL MCGRATH

Commission Secretary
CHARLES LAVIN

Members of the Public:
JOHN S. WISNIEWSKI
KARL T. SPINNER

Training and Education Advisory Council

The Training and Education Advisory Council, is an advisory body to the NJ State Fire Safety Commission and recommends training initiatives and standards to the Commission. Their recommendations, if approved by the Commission and the Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs are formalized into administrative regulations and published in the New Jersey Register. Members and their affiliation (volunteer or career) are listed below:

Anthony Avillo	c	Monmouth County Fire Academy
William Bates	v	Gloucester County Fire Academy
Brian Bennett	v	Iselin Vol. Fire Co
Patrick Bigoss	v	Mount Laurel FD (ret)
Patrick Boyle	v	
Michael Cahill	c	Ventnor City FD
Michael Corbo	c	Pleasantville Fire Co/ Somers Point Fire Co
Anthony Correia	c	Burlington Township FD (ret)
Michael Daley	c	Monroe Township Fire District #3
Chad J. DiGiorgio	c	East Hanover FD
Philip Drangula	c	Cinnaminson Township FD
Douglas Foley	v	Toms River Township FD
Arthur R. Hayducka	v	New Market Vol. FD
Robert V. Hill	v	Gloucester County Fire Academy (ret)
Chester Krawcykowski, Jr.	c	East Whitehouse Fire Co
John Kubilewicz	v	Pine Beach Fire Co/Slackwood Fire Co
Ronald D. Martinelli	v	Vineland FD (ret)
William Nolte	v	West Long Branch FD
Walter Nugent		
Alan Querec	v	Rocky Hill FD
Paul D. Roman	v	Shrewsbury Township FD
Paul C. Sandrock, Jr	c/v	Bellmawr Fire Dept (ret)
Charles Siedenburg	v	Logan Township Volunteer FD
Wes Suckey	v	Franklin Township FD
Joseph Vallo	c	Jersey City FD
Raymond L. Van Marter	c/v	Ass't Ocean County Fire Marshal/Toms River FC
Philip Wilk	v	Mine Hill FD
Nelson Wiest		NJ Career Fire Chiefs

New Jersey Division of Fire Safety

P.O. Box 809, Trenton NJ 08625-0809

Richard J. Mikutsky, *Director, State Fire Marshal*

Office of Training and Certification

P.O. Box 809, Trenton NJ 08625-0809

Phone: (609) 777-3552

Fax: (609) 292-6831

The responsibility of the Office of Training & Certification (OTC) is to provide statewide educational, training, and credentialing programs relating to fire suppression, fire protection, fire prevention, fire safety inspection, and to certify all titles authorized in N.J.A.C. 5:71 and 5:73. The OTC is responsible for the administration of the NJ fire training program and is the state certifying agency for Pro Board and IFSAC certifications.

Gregory Kirkham - Supervisor

Steven Taylor - Training & Education

Christopher Michallis - Contractor Certification Unit

Kean University, Fire Safety Training Program

1000 Morris Ave, Building L-145

Union, NJ 07083

Phone: (908) 737-3060

Fax: (908) 737-3065

The Kean University Fire Safety Training Program is the NJ Division of Fire Safety's contracted agent for the administration of the fire education, training, and credentialing program. In addition, the office conducts recertification CEU and other training programs for the New Jersey Fire Service.

DFS/Kean University Subject Matter Expert (SME) Groups

A subject matter expert group of qualified fire service instructors is assembled by the *State of New Jersey*, the *Division of Fire Safety* and *Kean University Fire Safety Training Program* to review and validate State test banks for the certification. This process involves a review of each question contained in the State test banks. It includes reviewing and approving the manipulative skill testing sheets as well. The groups meet to review the quality of each question and skill sheet to ensure technical accuracy to the appropriate adopted NFPA Standard and associated Job Performance requirement (JPR).

In the case of the test questions, each question is reviewed to verify that a quality question has been created, establishes relevance to the training program and skill competencies, establishes quality distracters, validate that the correct answer is presented in the choices created, and the citation is linked to the adopted Standard/JPR and page number of the adopted textbook. This leads to a completed Assessment Methodology Matrix for each certification level.

Skill sheets are reviewed to ensure that for each JPR within the adopted standard a relevant skill sheet has been provided to test each Requisite Skill (RS) within that JPR. Skill sheets are checked for accuracy and reviewed to ensure that all steps to complete the skill are listed and tested.

Tier I Training Centers

A Tier I training Center is defined in the New Jersey Administrative Code Section 5:73-2.2 (c) 1. Broadly, the section requires the facility to have classrooms, drill areas, SCBA confidence smokehouse, drill tower and a live burn facility. Testing offered under the New Jersey Fire Service Certification program will be restricted to Tier I facilities and career fire departments.

Currently the following facilities have met the criteria for Tier I classification:

Atlantic County Fire Training Center
Bergen County Fire Academy
Brick Township Fire Academy
Burlington County Emergency Services Training Center
Camden County Fire Academy
Cape May County Fire Academy
Cumberland County Fire Training Center
Gloucester County Fire Academy
Hunterdon County Emergency Services Training Center
Mercer County Fire Academy
Middlesex County Fire Academy
Middletown Fire Academy
Monmouth County Fire Academy
Morris County Public Safety Training Academy
Northfield Fire Department Fire Training Center
Ocean County Fire Academy
Paramus Life Safety Complex
Passaic County Public Safety Academy
Passaic Fire Department
Piscataway Township Fire School
Salem County Emergency Services Training Center
Somerset County Emergency Services Training Academy
Sussex County Fire Academy
Toms River Township Fire Academy, Fire Districts 1 & 2
Union County Fire Academy
Warren County Fire Academy

Certification Requirements, Fire Official

General Accreditation Information

Performance Standard

The NFPA 1037 standard, *Standard on Fire Marshal Professional Qualifications*, will be the performance standard referenced for Fire Inspector certification

Required texts

- Jones & Bartlett Learning publication titled “*Principles of Fire Prevention,*” 4th edition
- Uniform Fire Code (5:70, 5:71)
- International Fire Code (2015 NJ Edition)

Entrance requirements

Prior certifications

- Fire Inspector certification per N.J.A.C. 5:71-4.4

Evaluation requirements

Written Examination

- The Fire Official examination will be comprised of 60 randomly generated questions from the above “*Required texts*” and classroom learning
- Candidates will have a maximum of 2 hours to complete the examination. A score of 70% or above shall constitute a passing grade for the candidate. A score of 69 or below will constitute a failed attempt.

Written Examination Re-Test Policy

Applicants shall have three opportunities to successfully pass the written examination. If an applicant fails upon the third attempt to pass the examination, he or she shall be required to successfully repeat the entire Fire Official instructional program in order to test as described above.

5:73-5.7: Reasonable Accommodation

Accommodations for persons with documented learning disabilities will be established for written examinations as follows:

1. The Office of Training and Certification within the Division of Fire Safety and eligible institutions or organizations approved through this chapter shall offer reasonable and appropriate accommodations for those persons with learning disabilities in reading decoding, reading comprehension, and/or written expression.
2. A person requesting accommodations for written examinations shall make the request to the instructor of the training program, at least 30 calendar days prior to the examination date.
3. Documentation of the learning disability shall include one of the following:
 - i. A diagnosis based upon the results of a standardized psycho-educational assessment, including an individually administered standardized measure of intelligence and an individually administered standardized measure of achievement in reading decoding, reading comprehension, and/or written expression; or

- **ii.** A diagnosis made by a qualified professional, according to the criteria outlined in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DMS-5) (5th Edition), incorporated herein by reference, as amended and supplemented. This manual may be obtained by contacting the American Psychiatric Association, 800 Maine Ave, Washington, DC 20024 or at www.psychiatry.org. All diagnoses shall have been made within five years of the date of the written examination.
- A person who qualifies for accommodations, as reviewed and determined by the training program staff, shall be permitted a total of three hours to complete a 100-question exam, one and one-half hours for a 50-question exam, 65 minutes for a 35-question exam, and 45 minutes for a 25-question exam. Variations of these written examinations that use different quantities of examination questions shall be adjusted at the discretion of the instructor to reflect a comparable accommodation. Where it is determined that an individual is eligible for extended time for taking the written examination, the three-hour limit shall be extended by thirty (30) minutes.
- No special accommodation involving oral assistance shall be permitted.
- A maximum of three attempts per examination title shall be provided for a student to pass written examinations. A minimum passing score shall be 70 percent correct.
- All attempts to successfully pass written examinations shall be completed by the student according to the eligible training organization's policies and course completion timeline requirements.

Practical Examination

Practical examinations are intended to measure the practical skills of the Fire Official candidate. A Tier I fire academy is capable of testing 100% of the practical objectives; and the candidate must be prepared to exhibit proficiency in each. The final practical exam will consist of **ten** mandatory skills and **three** elective skill sheets to be chosen at random by the Eligible training organization doing the testing. A score of 80% or above on each skill sheet shall constitute a passing grade. The skill sheet utilized in the Fire Official Program is found <http://www.keanfiresafety.com/fire-official/>

Practical Examination Re-Test Policy

Candidates receiving unsatisfactory grades on 50% or more of the skill sets being tested will fail the skills test and be advised to seek remedial education and reapply for another certification testing process. Candidates receiving unsatisfactory grades on less than 50% of the skill set being tested will be allowed to retest those unsatisfactory skill sets in accordance with policies and procedures. All candidates re-testing will be allowed to retest a skill station up to two (2) times, within one (1) year of the start of the testing process. All candidates eligible for retesting may be given the opportunity to retest on the same day at the discretion of the testing Eligible Training Organization, depending upon available staffing, costs, and time limits to complete the testing.

Completion Time

Candidates have 18 months to complete the Fire Official program, including all retesting. The only two exceptions to this would be

- A medical condition verified by a physician
- Active duty in the U.S. military

Appeal Process

For actions taken against a candidate:

Any candidate aggrieved by a decision during a certification program is entitled to due process, including appeal and hearing. Any person believing that they have not received fair treatment within the certification process is entitled to the appeal process. There are two steps to the appeal process

- First Level of Appeal Testing Eligible Organization Chief/Director
- Final Level of Appeal: NJ Division of Fire Safety Training Supervisor

For appeal of test question

As required by both Pro Board and IFSAC, a student has the right to appeal the results of an examination. Proctors at the testing site, upon being notified by the student of a potential appeal, shall have no further conversation regarding the question itself, but rather will instruct the student that they have 15 business days from the date of the examination to file an appeal of the score received or the validity of an individual question. Such appeal must be filed with the Office of Training and Certification (OTC) New Jersey Division of Fire Safety, listing pertinent facts and the reason for the appeal, as well as the relief sought. The Supervisor, NJDFS OTC, will review and render a decision within 30 days of receipt. Such decisions will be conveyed to the student in writing, with a copy to the local testing agency.

Academic integrity/cheating

Any candidate who is caught cheating on any element of the examination process will:

- Be denied certification.
- Be immediately expelled from the current certification process and any other certification category or levels in which they have active files.
- Forfeit all certification fees paid prior to that point.
- At the Division's discretion, all certifications issued by the Department of Community Affairs held by any individual accused of cheating on any Division Certification Exam may be revoked.

Awarding of Certification

A certification for *Fire Official* shall be granted to an individual who is at least 21 years of age and has met all of the following requirements:

Prior certifications

- Firefighter Inspector certification per N.J.A.C. 5:71-4.4

Certification Requirements

- Minimum of three years' experience as a certified Firefighter Inspector:
- Satisfactorily complete the Fire Official course of instruction that meets the requirements of NFPA 1037, Standard for Fire Marshal Professional Qualifications, 2016 edition NOTE: Only an educational program completed within the three years prior to, or at the time of, application shall be accepted toward fulfilling the requirements for certification.
- Successful completion of the Fire Official written examination administered through the Office of Training and Certification.
- Has successfully passed a skills test administered through the approved Eligible Training Organizations.

Candidates will make application to the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety, Office of Training and Certification on the form illustrated in Attachment 1 of this document and obtainable online at

<http://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/dfs/forms/>